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# THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,191

SATURDAY 11 JANUARY 1997

WEATHER: Rain, sleet or snow

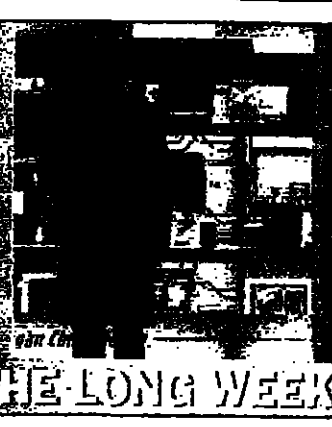
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THE LONG WEEKEND



Awakening: Darcy Russell rehearsing the lead role in the Royal Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty*, which has music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, choreography by Marius Petipa and designs by Maria Bjornson. Anthony Dowell's production opens at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, central London, today. Photograph: Laurie Lewis

## Building society gold rush dwarfs Eighties bonanza

Michael Harrison, Peter Rodgers and Gill Treanor

The £20bn giveaway of shares in the Halifax and other building societies in coming months is set to dwarf the instant profits made during the Thatcher privatisation years, boosting the feel-good factor in the run-up to the general election and beyond.

Between a third and a half of the adult population will share the bonanza, with most hand-outs in the region of £500 to £2,000.

Under the terms of the Halifax flotation announced yesterday, 8.5 million people will receive shares worth an average of £1,300 in June. Just over four million will receive the minimum allocation of 200 free shares worth between £780 and £900. The rest will receive this plus an additional hand-out of up to 981 shares, depending on the balance in their accounts on two key dates.

Members can vote by post by 17 February or in person at the special general meeting in Sheffield on 24 February. More than 50 per cent of the society's investing members - over 3.3 million - must vote in favour for the flotation to proceed.

The other building societies lining up to convert from mutual status include the Woolwich, which is paying out shares worth £3bn, and the Alliance and Leicester, which will be worth £2.5bn. The total amount being distributed to savers and borrowers in the next 10 months will be equivalent to 10p off the basic rate of income tax for one year and four to five times as large as the biggest Budget handouts ever seen.

Economists forecast yesterday that the giveaway would boost consumer spending by between £6bn and £8bn, with roughly two-thirds of the free shares saved and one-third cashed in and spent on holidays, home improvements, clothes and the like.

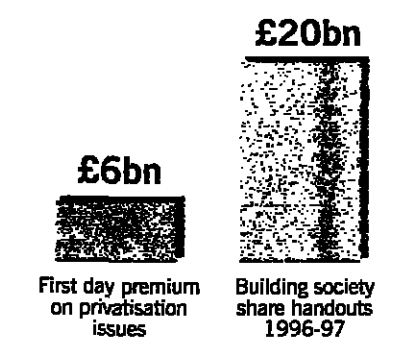
The £20bn in free shares compares with the estimated £6bn that investors could have made by cashing in their shares in privatisation companies immediately after flotation.

Whereas about 10 million people have benefited from the £66bn privatisation programme since 1979, nearly twice that number will benefit from the building society giveaways. Nor does the £20bn figure include the £4bn flotation of the insurance company, Norwich Union, scheduled for summer, or the £3.2bn of cash and shares already handed over to consumers from earlier building society flotations and takeovers.

Simon Briscoe, economist at the Japanese securities house Nikko said the boost to the economy, although small in comparison with total annual consumer expenditure of £550bn, would increase pressure for higher rates. Other economists warned an increase in base rates was very likely, given that the building society windfall would lift the growth in consumer spending to even more unsustainable levels.

David Walton of investment bankers Goldman Sachs said: "Households with the right building society accounts will gain this year but those consumers with borrowings will lose out." Other City experts fear that the legacy of the instant windfall payouts will be dearer home loans as quoted building societies are forced to raise mortgage rates so they can afford to make dividend payments to shareholders. Economists believe that the conversion of building societies will do the same for consumer

### Instant profits



confidence as did council house sales in the early 1980s and privatisation in the late 1980s.

The impending flood of financial institutions on to the stock market is reckoned to be one reason why the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, calculated he could get away with consumer tax cuts of just £750m in last November's Budget.

Kevin Gardner, chief economist at the US bank Morgan Stanley, said: "This is all part of the ongoing story of improving consumer confidence. The building society giveaways are the icing on the cake, but the cake was already pretty big already."

If the entire £20bn were cashed in, it would be enough to finance the entire country's high-street shopping for seven weeks and would give a boost to the economy four or five times as large as the biggest Budget handouts ever seen. This would almost certainly lead to a raging boom and a leap in inflation, and force the Government to raise interest rates sharply.

Nikko's consumer research found that one in six would spend their windfall, but the older and wealthier who generally get the largest payouts were more likely to save it. The evidence so far is that consumers are likely to react cautiously. Last year, there were building society windfalls totalling £3.2bn when Cheltenham & Gloucester was taken over by Lloyds Bank and National & Provincial by Abbey National. But only 16 per cent of N&P shares were cashed in.

David Owen, an economist at Kleinwort Benson, said this probably boosted growth by about 0.5 per cent, and he expects a further 0.5 to 0.75 per cent this year as a result of the renewed windfalls.

Only one society, the Alliance & Leicester, will have paid its members before the latest election dates in April and May. But the Halifax flotation - the biggest, with a handout of more than £11bn - the Woolwich flotation and the Bristol & West takeover by Bank of Ireland will issue payments shortly afterwards, in June and July.

Halifax details, page 18

Is this the first woman author in Britain?  
The answer is on page 6



**QUICKLY**

**Empress bungle**  
A catalogue of avoidable failures, bungled bureaucracy and allegations of financial loss turned the Sea Empress accident into a disaster, according to a report. Page 2

**Patten challenged**  
Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten was facing a serious challenge over allegations that senior immigration officials were involved in corruption and that officials lied about whether he was fired. Page 11

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## Dying cancer patient chained to bed

Jason Bennetto  
Crime Correspondent

An inquiry has been ordered into why a dying cancer patient was chained to his hospice bed by prison officers despite pleas from his mother and doctors.

Geoffrey Thomas, 25, who was awaiting trial for burglary, was only unshackled three hours before he died of stomach cancer. One ankle had been chained to the bed, but the shackle was transferred to his wrist after his ankle became swollen. He had been guarded at the hospice near Cardiff by two prison officers but was unable to walk.

The Prison Service said last night that it was setting up an inquiry into the use of restraints on prisoners. This follows a series of cases involving handcuffed women being taken to hospital to give birth and for breast cancer treatment.

Marina Davies, the mother of Mr Thomas said of her son yesterday: "He should have been allowed to die with dignity. He couldn't even walk, let alone escape."

She added: "I begged them to take the handcuffs and chain off but they wouldn't listen. The guards wouldn't even listen to the doctors. It is an inhuman way to treat a man who is dying. There is no

way in the world he could escape. My son was dying in front of our very eyes."

Mr Thomas was arrested in October accused of stealing a video recorder, radio and a telephone in a burglary at a house in his home town of Caerphilly, South Wales, and remanded in custody.

He was taken ill on 23 December and admitted to the city's University Hospital of Wales where he was found to be in the final stages of stomach cancer. He was transferred to the Marie Curie cancer hospice at Holme Tower, Penarth, on New Year's Day to control his pain. Despite his rapidly deteriorating con-

dition and repeated requests from doctors for him to be unshackled, he was kept manacled. Two days after his arrival, on Friday, 3 January, a bail application was made in the morning. The chains were taken off at 11am on grounds of compassion and he died at 1.45pm.

Professor Iona Finlay, Holme Tower's medical director, yesterday criticised the attitude of the prison service. She said: "I think it's desperately sad ... Mr Thomas couldn't have run away anywhere. He needed help to sit up in bed."

Last night the Prison Service ordered an inquiry, saying it "very much regretted" Mr Thomas's death.

## Hey Jimmy: heard about the minister who thinks most beggars are Scots?



The row over the homeless was fuelled by the Home Office minister David Maclean last night when he claimed that most beggars are Scots who sleep rough out of choice.

The Scots-born MP for Penrith and the Border described the beggars who asked him for money in London as "a disgrace" and an "embarrassment". Opposition parties called his remarks an "insult to fellow Scots".

Mr Maclean said of beggars: "I always give them something - I give them a piece of my mind. Most of them are Scottish and I've never met one yet who politely and gently asked

for money. There are no genuine beggars. Those who are in need have got all the social benefits they require."

"Every time we go and check, we find they won't go in hostels. Beggars are doing so out of choice because they find it more pleasant."

His comments, made to the *News & Star* newspaper in Carlisle, come just days after the Prime Minister accused the Labour leader, Tony Blair, of "hypocrisy" for appearing to back New York-style "zero tolerance" policies against beggars. John Major said Mr Blair had changed his tune, and had originally denounced the Govern-

ment for backing such tough measures. Mr Blair has said he does not give cash to beggars, but that he buys *The Big Issue* magazine for the homeless and wants to see proper provision to take them off the streets.

Labour frontbencher Henry McLeish said yesterday: "David Maclean's comments are disgraceful and an insult to fellow Scots. Mr Maclean's comments speak volumes about the Tory Government. This Government has a cure-nothing, do-nothing attitude, and seeks only scapegoats, not solutions."

But Mr Maclean said he was often accosted by aggressive Scottish beggars and drunks, who frightened visitors in London, and added: "Maybe my ears are more attuned to the Glasgow accent." However, he praised sellers of *The Big Issue* and people who cleaned car windscreens at traffic lights, saying they were doing a "good job" and "doing their bit to help themselves".

Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party, also denounced Mr Maclean, saying: "It's insulting to Scots and irresponsible." He accused Tory and Labour politicians of "picking on unfortunate people in their cheap tawdry for votes".

Last night, government and Tory party sources said the minister stood by his remarks.

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## news

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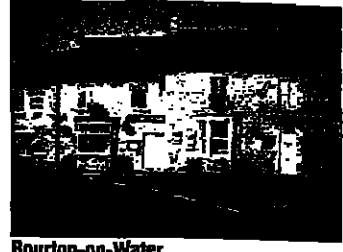
THE INDEPENDENT



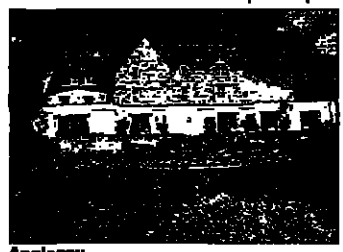
INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Some hotels will permit longer stays on the same basis: pay for two nights and stay for four etc.

Full details and a list of participating Minotel hotels will be printed on Sunday 12 January and Monday 13 January.



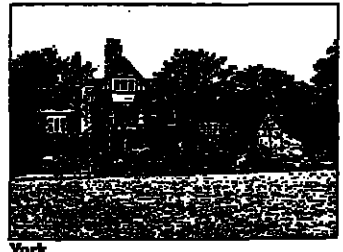
Bourton-on-Water



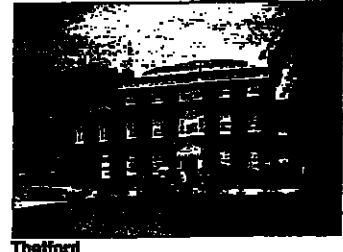
Anglesey



Northumbria



York



Thetford



Bleak midwinter: A flock of geese head east over Essex. A fortnight's ban on shooting wildfowl was imposed yesterday by the Department of the Environment to help safeguard birds enfeebled or unable to feed properly because of the freezing temperatures. Weather forecast, The Long Weekend, page 25 Photograph: Brian Harris

## Bungle led to tanker disaster

James Cusick

A catalogue of avoidable failures, bungled bureaucracy and allegations of financial loss turned the *Sea Empress* accident into a disaster, according to a leaked report.

The draft document, leaked to the BBC and due to be published within the next two months by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch, has put the Government under considerable pressure to review procedures designed to protect the coastline from pollution threats.

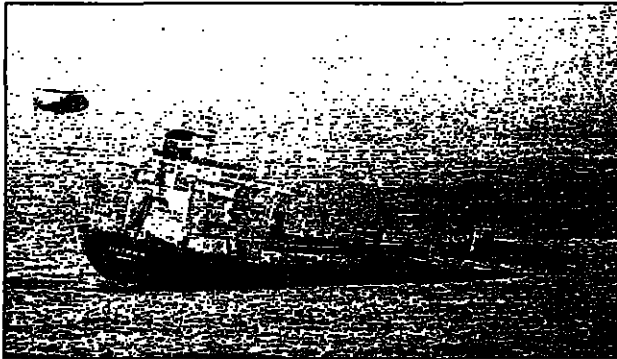
Although the shipping minister, Lord Goschen, criticised the leaked information and the furore it has caused as "inappropriate and premature", opposition politicians described the leak's content as "deeply disturbing" and called on the Government to take immediate action to ensure future co-ordination salvage operations.

The 147,000-tonne *Sea*

*Empress*, which sailed under a Liberian flag of convenience, ran aground off Milford Haven in south-west Wales in February last year. Ferrying crude oil from Scotland, the tanker failed to manoeuvre correctly into the two-mile wide entrance to the refinery.

A pilot was on board as she approached the harbour, but she still hit the rocks. The charts he was following are said to have been inaccurate.

According to the BBC's account of the draft report, "time-consuming and unnecessary bureaucratic procedures" resulted in the ship being grounded for seven days rather than two. The ship was carrying almost 130,000 tonnes of oil and spilled 70,000 tonnes into the sea. The massive spill, the full environmental impact of which is still to be evaluated, cost United Kingdom taxpayers an estimated £10m. Marine scientists are still studying the effects, especially those on two sea-bird

The *Sea Empress*: Failed to negotiate harbour entrance

colonies in the area which are among Europe's most valuable. Environmentalists say that the overall biological damage may not be fully understood for another decade.

When the report is published it is expected to say that the navigational charts around the mouth of the harbour were inadequate and not up to date. Inaccurate information was alleged to have been given on

the tides and the rescue operation is described as "salvage by committee".

Commenting on the report, Captain Ian Evans, a former marine safety adviser, said that a captain of a local pilot ship had told the salvage operators that the *Sea Empress* could have been moved in two days after the initial grounding. The advice was ignored.

In the attempted clean-up,

500 tonnes of chemical dispersant was used, the largest volume ever in a UK rescue.

Guy Linley-Adams, conservation director at the Marine Conservation Society, claimed that the first priority when the ship ran aground was finance. "We should never again allow the financial liabilities to cloud the judgement of those seeking to save a stricken and heavily laden tanker," Mr Linley-Adams says. The Government should now adopt a "command system" similar to that used in France where one person is appointed overall controller of a disaster with full authority that cannot be overridden by insurers' demands.

Labour's transport spokesman, Andrew Smith, described the draft as "deeply disturbing". He added: "It is alarming that the charts for the approaches to Britain's biggest oil port are reported to be inaccurate." He urged Sir George Young, the Secretary of State for Transport,

to ensure checks were made "on the accuracy of charts for the approaches to other ports and heavily trafficked sea-lanes".

Yesterday it remained possible that the report would have altered conclusions. Captain Peter Marriott, Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents, and one of the report's authors, said he was required to consult "those whose reputations may be adversely affected by my report". He added: "Until I have had an opportunity to consider any comments I receive from the individuals concerned my report cannot be finalised."

The report is also highly critical of the competence of harbour pilots, revealing that the training and examination of pilots at Milford Haven are unsatisfactory. John Pearn, a pilot who was on board when the ship grounded, was initially suspended but back handling spertankers after being reinstated by Milford Haven Port Authority.

## significant shorts

## Butcher accused over E.coli deaths

The butcher at the centre of the food poisoning outbreak which has left 16 pensioners dead appeared in court yesterday to face a charge of culpable and reckless conduct.

John Barr, of Wistow, Lancashire, appeared on petition at Hamilton Sheriff Court to face the charge which arises from the alleged supply by him of cooked meat from his shop. After the hearing, the Scottish Office released a statement which said Barr was committed for further examination and released on bail.

The statement said: "The Lord Advocate has emphasised to the procurator fiscal at Hamilton and Crown counsel that the public interest demand that in this case investigations be concluded without delay and that any trial should proceed as soon as possible."

Ian Burrell

## Train driver charged with manslaughter

The driver of a train that collided with an empty passenger service near Watford Junction station was charged yesterday with manslaughter and endangering the safety of passengers.

Peter Afford, 56, from Bushey, Hertfordshire, a driver employed by North London Railway, has been bailed to appear at Watford Magistrates Court on 4 April. One woman died and more than 70 people were injured in the collision on 8 August last year. Transport police said they had carried out an inquiry into the collision, and after consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service had decided to bring charges.

## Flu 'epidemic' downgraded

New influenza figures suggest "unusual activity" and some regional epidemics but no national epidemic of flu or flu-like illness, according to the latest surveillance figures.

The Royal College of General Practitioners' monitoring unit in Birmingham says there are now 230 cases per 100,000 of the population. The previous week's figure - for Christmas and New Year - was 122 per 100,000 - but this was artificially low because GP surgeries were closed for the holiday.

Dr Douglas Fleming, director of the unit, said the current rate was "within the range of usual winter activity". A flu epidemic has recently been redefined as more than 400 per 100,000 cases per population; above 200 per 100,000 is considered "unusual activity". *Li: Hunt*

## Family visit for nurses in Saudi

The families of two British nurses held in Saudi Arabia accused of murder are set to visit them in jail tomorrow.

Lucille McLaughlin, 31, from Dundee, and Deborah Parry, 41, from the Midlands are accused of killing 55-year-old Australian nurse Yvonne Gilford. The visit has been part arranged by Dundee West MP Ernie Ross who is a personal friend of the Saudi ambassador.

## Man accused of IRA attack

A man was due to appear in court today in connection with Monday's IRA rocket attack outside the Royal Courts of Justice in Belfast. The 27-year-old man is accused of conspiracy to murder.

Meanwhile, another five men are being questioned by detectives in Belfast in connection with the attack and the no-warning IRA car bombing of the Army's Northern Ireland headquarters last October when 31 people were injured. One soldier later died.

## BT pioneers alert system

The Home Office is studying a new disaster warning system which could ring thousands of homes simultaneously in a major emergency.

Computer engineers at BT have come up with a hi-tech replacement for the old civil defence air raid sirens in use since the Second World War. The proposed system, controlled from a central terminal, would alert

householders in any affected areas with a recorded alert and advice message. It could be used in the case of floods, factory explosions or radioactive leaks from nuclear power stations.

If approved, BT's Public Warning and Information (By Telephone) System would cost about £1.2m for each county to install.

## £4m payout for dinner ladies

Some 1,500 dinner ladies are set to share £4m in an out-of-court settlement of an equal pay dispute. The women, formerly employed by the now defunct Cleveland County Council, will receive payouts ranging between £600 and £5,400.

Their claims - comparing their wages with those of gardeners and refuse collectors who earned up to 40 per cent more - were lodged 18 months ago at industrial tribunals. *Barrie Clement*

## Ballooningists in new attempt

A Swiss-Belgian team of ballooningists is preparing to launch late today from Chateau d'Oex, near Gstaad in Switzerland, in an attempt to fly non-stop around the world - just days after Richard Branson, boss of the Virgin group, almost died in a similar attempt.

The two-strong team will fly in a balloon of the same design as that used by the Virgin team, though much smaller and lighter. Meanwhile Steve Fossett, an American millionaire stock trader, was waiting in St Louis, Missouri to make an attempt on the same record. *Charles Arthur*

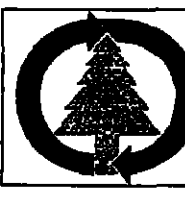
## Barclays renew libel claim

Millionaire press baron twins David and Frederick Barclay are making another attempt to sue BBC Director General John Birt for libel in France.

In July last year, a court in St Malo dismissed the reclusive brothers' claim for damages following a broadcast on BBC Radio Guernsey in October 1995 in which the Barclays claim they were falsely accused of corruption. Last summer, the court threw out their case - in which the Barclays claimed £108,000 damages - on the grounds that it was "unacceptable". The date fixed for the appeal decision is 24 January. *Tim Finin*

## Schoolboy told to grow his hair

A 12-year-old schoolboy has been isolated by teachers at Corpus Christi High School, Preston, because his hair is too short. Leon Carlisle has been told he will be separated from his classmates, to work in a room alone until his hair grows to "a decent length". His father is fighting the ban and says his son's hair is merely neat and tidy.



**NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING**  
Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

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## Paedophile driven out of council home

A convicted paedophile was yesterday driven out of the council accommodation where he was living, following a warning to schools by the local education authority.

The man was taken away from a bed-and-breakfast on the Raploch estate near Stirling, Central Scotland, after a protest by about 35 angry parents.

Police and council officials decided to move him because of concerns about his personal safety.

The case is the latest in the debate about whether convicted sex offenders should be allowed to live in the community and if so, whether parents should be told. The demonstration followed a recent warning to 12 local schools by Stirling Council. It did not name the man, but he has been named locally as Alan Christie, 50, who was released from prison in October after being jailed for a year at Stirling Sheriff Court last April, when he admitted lewd and libidinous conduct towards a girl of four. The court heard it was not his first offence and there were fears he could re-offend.

A council spokesman said the man would be rehoused else-

where: "He does not have anywhere to live and under homeless legislation we have to find him somewhere to live. Where he is now intolerable," he said.

He added that the man could be taken to another part of Scotland.

"There is an arrangement with other local authorities for emergency situations where we have to move someone elsewhere quickly."

Mothers expressed relief that he had been forced to leave the area. Lesley Marshall, 27, who has four young children said: "Families did not let their kids out on Thursday night when we found out he was here... We're just absolutely relieved he's gone."

The council defended its decision to advise local schools in December that a convicted paedophile was living in the area.

The education services director, Gordon Jeyes, said the council issued the alert as a "prudent" precaution.

The case comes two days after a council official in Birmingham faced disciplinary action for allegedly alerting mothers on a Birmingham council estate that a paedophile was moving

into the area. Mike Wood, a housing officer for the city council, allegedly tipped off mothers on the estate in Garrett's Green that George Taylor, who had been jailed for indecent assault on a young girl, was moving into the area.

Yesterday housing chiefs in Birmingham were said to be considering banning known child sex offenders from the city's 97,000 council homes.

The local authority in Middlesbrough has also announced that it will formally exclude sex offenders from estates. And last November head teachers at a group of primary schools in South Wales wrote to parents warning about a paedophile who moved into the area. The teachers passed on details of the man's appearance, type of car and vehicle registration number after police tipped off the local education authority.

Last December, ministers announced that paedophiles and other sex offenders will have to register their addresses with the police and that they were also considering a system from the United States in which communities were informed when paedophiles moved into the district.



# Chocolate, batteries, drysuits: sponsors try to put a price on adventure

Ian Burrell

For four days he suffered the most agonising solitude. Now the whole world wants to meet Tony Bullimore.

An agent has been instructed to preside over an auction for his astonishing story involving film companies, publishing houses and newspapers.

One Sunday newspaper was reputed to have made a £100,000 offer for an exclusive interview. American film agents promised Hollywood movies and marketing executives have identified opportunities for endorsement of everything from confectionery to sports equipment and the kind of drysuit that saved him from freezing to death. The loss of the *Exide Challenger* may turn its skipper into a millionaire.

The Berkshire-based sports management company Masters International was yesterday seeking to secure for Bullimore the first of a series of lucrative deals, for a newspaper exclusive.

Meanwhile, the confectionery firm Cadbury was yesterday trying to confirm that it was one of his chocolate brands that had sustained him while he was stranded in icy waters, 1,400 miles south of Australia. "If it was, we will want to talk to him," said a spokesman.

Exide Batteries, the South Wales-based arm of the American battery giant, was congratulating itself on a last-minute decision to sponsor Bullimore: the boat, seen on world-wide television, was renamed in the week before the round-the-world race began. Phil Jones, deputy managing director, said he was hoping to extend the company's relationship with the yachtsman.

Richard Branson, who himself escaped when his hot-air balloon made an emergency landing at the start of his attempt to go round the world this week, has offered to provide the yachtsman and his wife, Lalael, with free flights on his airline Virgin Atlantic.

The only obstacle in Bullimore's path appears to be the yachtsman himself. Despite his reputation in yachting circles as a wheeler-dealer figure who

always has an eye open for money-making opportunities, the garrulous sailor was doing his best to give the story away for nothing.

Having been on the phone to the BBC's *Today* programme within hours of his rescue, he was in talkative mood again yesterday from the HMAS *Adelaide*, where he is being treated for mild hypothermia. The frigate is expected to reach Australia on Monday.

Bullimore, 56, revealed how he twice nearly left the safety of his capsized boat after wrongly believing he was about to be rescued. "I nearly dived out on a couple of occasions thinking there was a rescue vessel outside, but I was terrified because once I dived out I couldn't get back in," he said.

And he admitted how close he had come to death. "I started asking myself 'Am I really preparing my grave?' I really believe I was just on the brink. I got to the point where I was thinking in hours."

Born in Southend-on-Sea, Bullimore helped his father, Bill, on market stalls in Romford, before setting up a wedding photography business at the age of 15. He then volun-

teered to crew a yacht to South Africa and later sailed to Jamaica where he met his wife. Returning to Bristol, he ran a nightclub which catered for the city's Afro-Caribbean community until it burnt down. He then

set up a business in Birmingham selling bankrupt stock. In the meantime he was acquiring a growing reputation for his sailing, sharing the Yachtsman of the Year title in 1985. He has raced across the Atlantic

27 times. He has almost lost his life three times, and his latest brush with death is thought to have cost the rescue authorities as much as £5m. "I would agree with those questioning the cost," he said yesterday. "There is something a little absurd about the tremendous cost of rescuing people who do foolhardy things." But at the end of the day, it was part of human nature to take on daredevil challenges. "People walk to the

South Pole, they go down in the seas, they go up as high as they can, they go sideways, whatever. If all these things were taken away it would be a little bit like the taming of mankind."

Letters, page 13



Brothers in arms: Tony Bullimore (right) embracing Chief Petty Officer Peter Wicker, who pulled him from the ocean after his ordeal, on board HMAS Adelaide yesterday Photograph: AP

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Flu 'epidemi

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New influenza figures are

"unusual activity" and

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national epidemic of flu

like illness, according

latest surveillance figure

The Royal College of

General Practitioners' moni

unit in Birmingham

there are now 231 cases

(100,000) of the disease

The previous week's fig

for Christmas and New Y

was 122 per 100,000 - he

was virtually low becau

GP surgeries were clos

the holidays.

Dr Douglas Fleming, a

member of the unit, said

the current pattern was

typical of a usual winter

with a few flu epidemics

happening. He said the

country's population was

about 55 million, and

the number of deaths

from the disease was

about 100,000.

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THE INDEPENDENT



### Princess Gwenllïan: Died fighting the Normans near Kidwelly in 1136

**The White Book of Rhydderch: The oldest copy of the Four Branches of the Mabinogion** Photograph: Rob Stratton

Princess Gwenllïan, daughter of Gruffudd ap Cynan, King of Gwynedd, was born in 1098, when Wales was under attack by the Normans. Gwenllïan's brother, Owen Gwynedd, took over from his father and became one of the great Welsh princes. Gwenllïan married and lived in the valleys around Dinewr, then dense with protective forests. Here she raised her four sons, Morgan, Maelgwn, Maredudd and Rhys. On New Year's Day 1136 an attack was launched on the Normans and her husband left to join the battle. While he was away, the Norman-backed Lord of Kidwelly attacked, and Gwenllïan led the defence, killing him. She was captured and taken to Brecon Castle, where, although her youngest son was only four, Gerald of Wales, writing later that century, said: "She marched at the Queen of the Amazons and a second Penthesilea like her army." Gwenllïan was killed on the battlefield. Maes Gwenllïan, which has never been fully excavated, is likely to renew interest in the Four Branches of the Yggdrasil, have compared to Boudicca.

Birth (Mrs/Ms)    /    / 19  

**Andrew Brown**

trademark, the company that distributes Bass products, will seek an injunction early next week alleging the disagreement does not constitute a trademark.

[illegible][illegible]

that a monk would have the concerns of a woman writer in matters like child-bearing, childlessness, wet-nursing, fostering and the upbringing of children, all of which figure in the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*. The author is also very good at describing women who get men out of mess.

"The *Four Branches* can be seen as that very rare thing, a feminist fairy story in which the roles are reversed and it is resourceful princesses who rescue princes." In his book, *Medieval Welsh Literature*. Dr

have not seen the argument and I keep an open mind because there are so many possibilities. This will be the first time a woman has been suggested.

Dr Sioned Davies, senior lecturer in Welsh at the University of Wales, Cardiff, who is translating the *Mabinogi* said: "I'd like to think it was a woman, but there is no firm evidence on authorship and a lot of prose of this period is anonymous. He is bringing up some very interesting points and I do not rule it out but I really need to see his arguments first."

# Inquiry into fatal ambulance delay

An inquiry has been launched into why a dying man who was turned away from one hospital took six hours to arrive at another 50 miles away – only to die shortly afterwards.

Toy Usher, 60, died of heart failure and pneumonia on New Year's Eve after the ambulance transferring him from Joyce Green Hospital in Dartford, Kent – where there were no intensive care beds available – to the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital in Margate got into difficulties in the freezing conditions.

At 6.45am he was put in an ambulance to begin the journey to Margate. His wife, Georgina, was told she could not travel with him. During the 50-mile journey, the ambulance carrying Mr Usher had to stop because of wintry conditions and the crew diverted to the Medway Hospital in Gillingham. After spending more than

three hours at the Medway Hospital, he was transferred to Margate at 12.25pm. He was pronounced clinically dead shortly afterwards.

Now his widow is demanding to know why it took so long for her husband to arrive at the hospital, after she made the same journey in two hours. She said: "We knew my husband was dying but we would have liked him to die in dignity, with his family around him, not in an ambulance on his own."

A spokesman for Joyce Green Hospital said they had launched an inquiry into the matter.

An Ambulance Service spokesman said: "En route to Margate hospital the bad conditions caused the windshield washer on the ambulance to freeze up... and the decision was made to divert to Medway for the patient to receive continuing care in the warm."

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# Church talks priest mistrust

**Andrew Brown**  
*Editor, The Independent*

There is a growing mistrust of the clergy in this country, and it is not only the laity who are responsible for this. The clergy themselves are partly to blame. They have been too often in the wrong, and they have not been able to admit it. They have been too often in the wrong, and they have not been able to admit it. They have been too often in the wrong, and they have not been able to admit it.

The Bishop of London, Dr. George Bell, has said that the clergy are "too often in the wrong, and they have not been able to admit it." This is a very honest statement, and it is one that the laity should be proud of. It shows that the clergy are not infallible, and that they are human beings who can make mistakes. It is a statement that should be a relief to many of us who have been disappointed in the clergy in the past.

Dr. Bell's statement is a very honest one, and it is one that the laity should be proud of. It shows that the clergy are not infallible, and that they are human beings who can make mistakes. It is a statement that should be a relief to many of us who have been disappointed in the clergy in the past.

After all, if a priest has fathered a child by a woman in some way he is personally responsible and that means he must have been negligent and earn sufficient to support the child and the mother.

The Bishop has also said the possibility of church funds being used to support the children of priests who are in the ministry. An spokesman for the Bishops' Conference said yesterday: "Cases of this kind have always arisen in the life of the Church, but their frequency should not be exaggerated."

## Pubs could dry in p

**Barrie Clement**  
*Labour Editor*

Beer supplies to one of Britain's biggest pub chains face severe disruption after delivery workers voted to take industrial action over pay cuts of up to 25 per cent.

The Bass group, the company at the centre of the dispute, owns some 4,000 pubs nationwide and delivers Grolsch, Carling Black Label, draught Bass, Catfish, Tennents and Lamot Pils to a total of between 25,000 and 30,000 outlets.

Leaders of the 1,400 distribution workers voted by a 72 per cent majority to strike and by 85 per cent in favour of industrial action short of stoppages. An overtime ban and work to rule will begin next Friday, followed by 48-hour walk-outs on 23 and 24 January and 6 and 7 February.

Tradecrest, the company that distributes Bass products, will seek an injunction early next week alleging the disagreement does not constitute a lawful trade dispute. The distribution company, 49 per cent owned by



## Ulster's law of the jungle puts big cats in firing line

David McKittrick  
Ireland Correspondent

A rescue operation has been launched in an attempt to save animals whose lives have been placed at risk by the threatened closure of a safari park in Northern Ireland.

The park, which houses lions, tigers, chimpanzees and other animals, is struggling financially following a disastrous summer when takings were drastically reduced by the breakdown of the IRA ceasefire and the Drumcree marching season stand-off.

It is said that closure would mean most of the animals would have to be put down since the lions are territorial and there is little demand from

other parks and zoos for the animals.

The Causeway safari park is in north Antrim, close to the Giant's Causeway and in one of Northern Ireland's more popular tourist areas. The number of visitors to the area from the Irish Republic and elsewhere increased markedly following the 1994 IRA ceasefire.

The park employs three full-time staff together with around 40 workers during the summer season. Its future was placed in question earlier this week with a Customs and Excise High Court action for the non-payment of VAT. The Official Receiver is now involved.

The park's director Jim Garvin said: "The animals



Endangered species: Lions and other animals at the Causeway Safari Park are facing an uncertain future following the breakdown of the IRA ceasefire

Photographs: Paul McErlane

cannot be moved from the park if it closes. Lions are territorial and most of the other animals have been born and raised in the park. Their natural hunting instincts have therefore gone.

"We are hoping it will not have to close if some rescue package can be obtained. In the meantime the receivers have assured us that the animals will be looked after. For the past

three months we have been feeding the animals out of our own pockets. Our priorities are to protect them and the considerable seasonal employment which the park provides."

His wife Coral added: "The lions are all in families, they're all in prides and groups, and you couldn't split them up."

Davy Leggett, who has been a keeper at the park for 26 years, said: "The park is my livelihood but more importantly it is a hobby. The animals are like children to me, and if they had to be put down it would be like losing a relation."

The local council and a number of other organisations, together with the North Antrim MP, the Rev Ian Paisley, are now involved in discussions on ways of saving the park.

## Church in talks with priests' mistresses

Andrew Brown  
Religious Affairs Correspondent

The Catholic Church has opened contacts with support groups for priests' mistresses.

The Bishop of Portsmouth, the Right Rev Christopher Budd, has been asked formally by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to talk to the groups, and last week visited one of them.

The Bishop's negotiations mark a considerable shift in the attitude of the English Catholic church towards openness, and widens the gulf between the English and the Scottish hierarchies when it comes to dealing with failures of celibacy.

Bishop Budd told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "Where you have relationships which are clandestine and somebody is still in priestly ministry, the truth must come out and the priest concerned must actually accept that truth and move out of ministry and do what he can to support either the woman or woman and children."

"After all, if a priest has fathered a child by a woman in some ways he is personally responsible and that means he may have to leave ministry and earn sufficient to support the child and the mother."

The Bishop held out the possibility of church funds being used to support the children of priests who stay in the ministry.

A spokesman for the Bishops' Conference said yesterday: "Cases of this kind have always arisen in the life of the Church, but their frequency should not be exaggerated."

"Most, though unfortunately not all, have been and are responsibly and discreetly handled, having regard to the best interests of those involved, especially any children."

The admission that "not all" such relationships had been handled in the best interests of the women and children involved drew an extravagant laugh from one of the women who has met Bishop Budd, and who is herself the mother of two small children by a priest.

The woman, who did not wish to be named, said: "A lot of the damage is clearly already done. A lot of guys have continued in ministries knowing that they have responsibilities: whether a woman who has had an abortion, or the child has been adopted. There is a double-standard being adopted: he is ministering and saying the Mass, yet leading a secret life. This has to be bad for the church."

It appears that the policy for dealing with these cases varies from diocese to diocese. Catholic bishops have a considerable degree of administrative independence.

A member of the Sunflower group, one of those to which Bishop Budd has been talking, said: "In some dioceses, the priest may be encouraged to go into a rehabilitation as if he was some kind of drug addict. Many priests would be offered the chance of going abroad - the relationship with the woman remains secret, even though she could be in the Church, and even in orders herself. But the first responsibility should be to the woman."

## Pubs could run dry in pay row

Barrie Clement  
Labour Editor

Beer supplies to one of Britain's biggest pub chains face severe disruption after delivery workers voted to take industrial action over pay cuts of up to 25 per cent.

The Bass group, the company at the centre of the dispute, owns some 4,000 pubs nationwide and delivers Grolsch, Carling Black Label, draught Bass, Caffreys, Tennents and Lamot Pils to a total of between 25,000 and 30,000 outlets.

Leaders of the 1,400 distribution workers voted by a 72 per cent majority to strike and by 85 per cent in favour of industrial action short of stoppages. An overtime ban and work to rule will begin next Friday, followed by 48-hour walk-outs on 23 and 24 January and 6 and 7 February.

Tradetech, the company that distributes Bass products, will seek an injunction early next week alleging the disagreement does not constitute a lawful trade dispute. The distribution company, 49 per cent owned by

Bass and 51 per cent by the National Freight Corporation is confident that the court will ban the action.

Although terms and conditions have always been negotiated locally at more than 50 depots, the Transport and General Workers' Union is calling for action in support of central bargaining to prevent "attacks" on their terms and conditions. Employees at one depot in the North-east, the only one where draymen belong to the GMB general union, will be dismissed on Monday if they refuse to sign contracts reducing their wages.

Brian Revell, a T&G national official, said Bass was profitable and had no need to adopt such a policy. He said the company had already cut wages by £100 a week at one depot - a drop of around 25 per cent - and was attempting to impose a similar pay level elsewhere.

A Tradetech spokesman said it was competing with other distribution companies and that even after the wage cut, its employees would be among the top 25 per cent earners in the sector.

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# Turkey hints at strike on Cypriot missiles

Alarm over the escalating crisis has spurred on mediation efforts, writes Tony Barber

The international crisis over Cyprus deepened yesterday as Turkey and its Turkish Cypriot clients piled more pressure on the Greek Cypriots not to deploy new Russian missiles in their sector of the island. "If they are deployed, we will do what is needed, and if that means they need to be hit, they will be hit," Turkey's Foreign Minister, Tansu Ciller, said in Ankara.

Blaming the Greek government for the crisis, she added: "Greece is the country which undoubtedly bears most responsibility for this aggressive policy." The tough language made little impact either on Greece or on the Greek Cypriot-led government of Cyprus, which is adamant that it will go ahead with plans to buy the S-300 surface-to-air missile system. However, diplomats said there was still scope for a negotiated solution to the problem, as it could take many months for the missiles to arrive from Russia.

pre-emptive military strike would be unacceptable.

If the missiles are installed, their 90-mile range would enable the Greek Cypriots to attack Turkish aircraft in Turkey's airspace, as well as that of Cyprus. The Turks are hinting at various military counter-measures, ranging from the destruction of the missile launch pads to a blockade of Cyprus.

In a statement distributed by the Turkish foreign ministry yesterday, the Turkish Cypriot leader, Raul Denktash, mentioned another option when he threatened to take over Varosha, a disputed area that has been sealed off since Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus. Most property in Varosha, which lies just south of the Turkish-held resort of Famagusta, is owned by Greek Cypriots.

The confrontation over the missiles has erupted at the start of a year that was supposed to see the launch of a concerted international effort to settle the Cyprus dispute. The US, Britain, other European Union countries and the United Nations were all hoping to see direct talks this spring between Mr Denktash and the Greek Cypriot leader, President Glafcos Clerides.

The prospects for such talks have not completely collapsed, but it is hard to see how face-to-face negotiations could start

as long as the missile crisis remains unresolved. Mr Clerides has not met Mr Denktash since 1994 and says there is no point in arranging another meeting unless his rival is prepared to make substantive compromises.

Even before the missiles crisis, the political and military climate on Cyprus did not appear to favour a diplomatic breakthrough. In the worst violence since 1974, five people – four Greek Cypriots and one Turkish Cypriot – were killed last year in clashes along the UN buffer zone dividing the two sectors.

The missiles deal with Russia represents the Cyprus government's first serious attempt at building a credible air defence system after 22 years of Turkish superiority in the air. The government has not disclosed how many missiles it is buying, but they are part of a steady defence build-up that has been closely co-ordinated with Greece.



Flashpoint: The buffer zone in Cyprus watched over by the UN, which has pressed Greece and Turkey to conduct direct talks. Photograph: Graham Trott/Katz

## Are homeless people worth just 2 minutes of your time?

**T**HE NUMBER of homeless families in the UK has almost doubled in the last fifteen years. Shelter believes much more decisive action is needed.

When you look at the figures, providing decent housing for homeless people makes economic sense. The savings on social services and extra health care costs alone would make it economically worthwhile. And what price do you put on ruined lives? The children, for instance, who may never know a real home...

It's not about politics, it's about getting homeless people decent homes, and off the streets. But to get this message across we need to know what you feel about homelessness.

Please spend just two minutes of your time completing this survey, and return it as soon as you can. If you can also make a donation of £15 (or whatever you can afford) we would be very grateful. We want to publish the results as soon as possible, so please don't delay.

**URGENT:**  
Please reply  
by JAN 22  
1997



## Bomb blasts deal severe blow to Hebron talks

Patrick Cockburn  
Jerusalem

In the aftermath of two bomb explosions in Tel Aviv overnight Israel and the Palestinian leadership tried yesterday to reduce the political impact of the attack – the first since March – on the already faltering talks about the Israeli redeployment of its troops on the West Bank.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, promised "to wage war against the terrorists" and said that, if they were found to have come from areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority, then it would not be "business as usual".

Freih Abu Mdein, the Palestinian Minister of Justice, said: "I don't think Palestinians were behind these explosions because such attacks serve only Netanyahu."

Despite Mr Netanyahu's harsh words he has continued talks with Dennis Ross, the United States peace envoy. But the effect of two pipe bombs, each containing half a kilo of an explosive mix of lemon, nitric acid and acetone, which seriously injured nobody when they blew up in a south Tel Aviv red light district, shows how little it takes to plunge relations between Israel and the Palestinians into renewed crisis.

Nobody has yet claimed responsibility for the bombs, which police at first thought might be the result of a criminal feud, but the most likely Palestinian faction to be behind them is the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Based in Damascus, the group has carried out sporadic killings of Israeli settlers over the last year.

Israeli police sealed off Jerusalem from the West Bank yesterday as 80,000 Palestinians prayed in and around al-Aqsa mosque on the first day of the Ramadan fast. Traffic in the city came to a halt because of security measures and Palestinian worshippers had to leave their identity cards in boxes before they entered the mosque.

In his sermon, broadcast live to Muslims around the world, Sheikh Hamed Beitawi, a leading figure in Hamas, the Islamic militant group, sharply attacked Israel, saying: "Israel is beating the drums of war and aggression against Muslims and Islam."

In the Palestinian town of Nablus yesterday Hamas held a memorial rally for Yahyah Ayyash, the Palestinian bomb maker who was blown up by a booby-trapped mobile phone in Gaza on 5 January last year. It was in revenge for his assassination that Hamas and Islamic Jihad carried out four suicide bomb attacks in February and March last year which killed 63 people and led to the victory of Mr Netanyahu and his right-wing government in the election in May.

Hamas is unlikely to have carried out this week's bomb attack in Tel Aviv because its local leadership is reported to have promised Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, that it has suspended its bombing campaign. Mahmoud Zahar, a Hamas spokesman, said last week that his organisation would not retaliate after the shooting of seven Palestinians in Hebron by an Israeli settler because so many of its members were in prison and the movement had been "disarmed" by the Palestinian Authority.

Negotiations between Mr Arafat and Israel remain deadlocked over the time scale for further Israeli withdrawals under the Oslo accords. The Palestinians want Israel to pull out of all Palestinian villages by September this year, while Mr Netanyahu wants to delay the withdrawal for two years. Mr Arafat has rejected a US compromise proposal that Israeli troops leave in mid-1998. Terms for Israel's partial withdrawal from Hebron are no longer in real dispute.

### Shelter National Opinion Survey on Homelessness

Please help us make this the widest ever survey of attitudes to homelessness. Your contribution will be much appreciated, and your answers treated in the strictest confidence. Please complete and return by January 22nd 1997.

Q1. Are you aged:

18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐  
45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65-74 ☐ 75+ ☐

Q2. Do you:

own your own home or have a mortgage? ☐  
rent privately? ☐  
rent from a Housing Association or local authority? ☐  
live in someone else's home? ☐  
other ☐

Q3. Do you share your home with:

children? Yes ☐ No ☐  
partner/husband/wife or anyone else related to you? Yes ☐ No ☐  
Someone not related to you? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q4. Have you ever been homeless or at serious risk of losing your home yourself (through a tenancy ending, not being able to afford the rent or mortgage, break up of relationship, or other reason)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q5. Do you know anyone else who is either homeless or at serious risk of losing their home in such a way?

At risk of homelessness Yes ☐ No ☐  
Actually homeless Yes ☐ No ☐

Q6. Bad housing can have serious long-term consequences. Please show how important you view these problems as being (tick one box only for each problem; 1 being the most important):

Children doing badly at school 1 2 3  
People suffering asthma, bronchitis and other serious diseases ☐ ☐ ☐  
People becoming more dependent on social services ☐ ☐ ☐

Q7. Do you agree or disagree that homelessness has a bad effect on the following?

The families and individuals concerned Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Don't know ☐  
Local communities Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Don't know ☐  
Society as a whole Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Don't know ☐  
The economy Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Don't know ☐

Q8. Do you think politicians are at present sufficiently concerned about the plight of homeless people?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

Q9. Would you be willing to write a letter to an MP which might help to get homeless people housed?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

Q10. Would you be willing to make a donation to Shelter to help homeless people?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Name: (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone No:

Thank you for your time. If you would like to make a donation, please return your cheque, made out to 'Shelter', with this survey. We suggest £15, but any amount you can give will be greatly appreciated.

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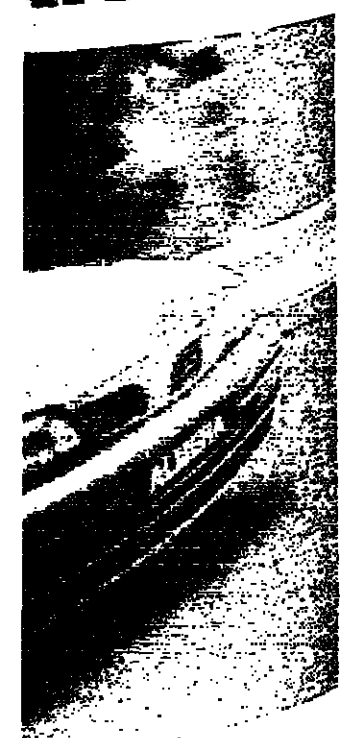
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Pain of devotion: Christian fanatics in Manila grimace as they scramble to get their hand on a rope used to pull a supposedly miraculous statue of Christ, during an annual religious festival. Photograph: Romeo Ranoco/Reuters

## Patten embroiled in Hong Kong lying row

Stephen Vines  
Hong Kong

A scandal engulfing the Hong Kong government deepened yesterday after allegations that officials, from Governor Chris Patten down, lied about the circumstances in which Lawrence Leung, head of the immigration department, left office last year.

It questions Mr Patten's claim to be leading an honest administration and the integrity of leading officials, who said Mr Leung was not dismissed but left for personal reasons.

He denied this yesterday when he appeared before a legislators' inquiry and said he was told the government "no longer trusted him"; he was given the choice of resigning or being dismissed. He also confirmed he was the subject of a six-month corruption investigation for living beyond his

means and that he maintained unusually close ties with Chinese officials.

His testimony before the committee, which faced weeks of stonewalling by officials, united all shades of opinion in fury against the administration. Allen Lee, leader of the Liberal Party, said that if the government had been found lying to the people in any other country, it would be toppled. It now seems likely the committee will take the unprecedented step of summoning the Governor to explain himself.

Yesterday Mr Leung said he was harassed over a three-year period but had no idea why he was being treated this way nor why he was forced to resign. He stressed that he was cleared of corruption allegations. However, other allegations have been aired, stating that he secretly supplied information to

the Chinese government about Chinese dissidents and disclosed secret details of who had been given British passports under the British scheme which allows Hong Kong residents to remain in the colony but gives the option of an escape-hatch if the situation deteriorates under Chinese rule.

There were also allegations about Mr Leung's department allowing a flood of Chinese immigrants to come into Hong Kong. None of the claims has been substantiated.

Mr Leung went to some lengths to boast of his good connections with Chinese officials. Asked to give an account of what he did after being dismissed, he omitted to say that within hours he met Chen Zuo'er, a Chinese official responsible for negotiating with Britain over handover arrangements for Hong Kong. This

came to light after a legislator rushed into the chamber, saying a member of the public had been spotted with Mr Chen in a coffee-shop the day he was fired. Mr Leung confirmed this, saying he told Mr Chen he was "sorry, I can't co-operate with you any more". He added: "I had to tell him some of my feelings. I can't say I didn't give him the impression that I am being persecuted." Mr Leung also disclosed that he held regular meetings with Chinese officials, such as Mr Chen, "at which my work was reviewed and how to improve it" was discussed.

Last night Lam Woon-kwong, Secretary for the Civil Service, admitted that Mr Leung was forced to resign but said it "was his choice". He said the government could not have disclosed this previously because of confidentiality rules.

### significant shorts

#### Death-crash diplomat may be tried in US

President Eduard Shevardnadze said he was prepared to waive the immunity of a Georgian diplomat involved in a car crash in Washington in which an American, Joviane Waltrick, 16, died. He also said Georgy Makharadze should stay in the US until an inquiry was completed "unless a different agreement between the two governments is reached".

Reuters - Tbilisi

#### Yeltsin to be off for three weeks

Boris Yeltsin's absentee presidency is to continue at least another three weeks because of his pneumonia and seems certain to delay the tackling of economic and social problems. His physician, Sergei Mironov, said he didn't "dare speak of a breakthrough yet".

Phil Reeves - Moscow

#### Striker's fiery protest

A South Korean worker set himself on fire in protest at a new labour law after a court issued arrest warrants for union leaders. The man had 30 per cent burns but was not critical.

Reuters - Seoul

#### Hoxha's widow scents freedom

Nexhmije Hoxha, 76, widow of the Albanian dictator Enver Hoxha, left jail after serving five years for embezzling state cash.

Reuters - Tirana

#### Maoists kill 16 police in South India offensive

The Maoist People's War Group killed 16 people in an attack on a police station in south India. Two squads of guerrillas raided the station in Karakagudem, Andhra Pradesh, and exchanged gunfire with police for more than half an hour.

Reuters - Hyderabad

#### UK and Spain to fight drugs

Britain and Spain were determined to defeat drug-trafficking, particularly of cocaine and hashish, Tom Sackville, a Home Office Minister, said after meeting his Spanish counterpart, Ricardo Marti Fluxa.

Elizabeth Nash - Madrid

#### Mobutu has more surgery

President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, who has prostate cancer, underwent minor surgery in Monaco a day after returning to his French Riviera villa following a brief visit to his country.

AP - Monaco

#### Israeli army's gay legacy

A court ordered the Israeli army to recognise a gay man as the spouse of a deceased colonel and extend him the same benefits as military widows, including a pension. "The appeals committee decided it would recognise Adir Steiner as an army widower and grant him the according rights," a court spokesman said.

Reuters - Jerusalem

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### Get the facts about HRT

Any woman approaching or going through the menopause today has the option of taking HRT - the biggest (and most controversial) issue in women's health since the advent of the Pill. *Understanding HRT and the Menopause* arms you with the essential facts to decide if it's right for you. This invaluable guide from *Which?* will help you weigh up for yourself the pros and cons of hormone replacement therapy. Honest, reliable, informative and highly readable, it looks at many vital issues, including: • symptoms and signs of the menopause • managing the menopause with or without HRT • breast cancer and the links between cancer and hormone treatment • osteoporosis • the importance of diet, exercise and stress

management • the need for regular screening and health checks • and more besides! *Understanding HRT and the Menopause* gives women the opportunity to take control at a challenging time in their lives and make a truly informed, responsible decision about their health. Why don't you invest in a copy today? *Understanding HRT and the Menopause* costs just £9.99 (plus £1.50 P&P). To order, send your name and address, the book title and your payment (cheque made payable to *Which?* Ltd or credit card number with expiry date) to: *Which?*, PO Box 89, Dept SP174, Hertford, SG14 1TB. Orders are normally despatched within 14 days of receipt. Full refund if not satisfied.

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## international

# In the temples of Hollywood, they like to look after the stars of Scientology

A constellation of Hollywood stars and leading producers and directors sign a joint letter defending a religious group which has frequently been derided as a cult and pinning accusations of Nazism on modern Germany and the reaction in America is, shall we say, muted. It barely registers, in fact.

That – the absence of surprise and debate in the United States – is almost more remarkable than the act itself. Is the American media intimidated by this group's fearsome reputation for taking out lawsuits or is what happened here simply not considered especially unusual?

We are talking, of course, about the full-page advertisement placed this week in the *International Herald Tribune* lambasting the German government for its intolerance of the Church of Scientology. Signed by such figures as Dustin

The sect of the 'Thetans' has acquired a kind of respectability in the US, says **David Osborne**

Hoffman, Goldie Hawn, Mario Puzo and Aaron Spelling, it explicitly evoked the Nazi atrocities against the Jews six decades ago and the Holocaust.

The letter's author was Bertram Fields, a well-known lawyer to the stars. A Jew, he is not a Scientologist and nor are the 33 other signatories. He has explained that he was acting on a conviction that Scientologists were a persecuted minority in Germany who needed protection.

"I decided that if I was going to stand by my principles, I had to do something about this," he said. "I sent a detailed letter to a number of my friends, in addition to a copy of this letter, and asked if they would sign it."

Surprisingly, most of the people I sent it to agreed.

Scientology would seem like a risky cause for public figures to become associated with. Founded by the American science fiction writer, L Ron Hubbard (LRH to church members) in the Fifties, the church has suffered always from the perception of outsiders that it is both barmy in its beliefs and manipulative and dangerous in its recruiting and use of members' money.

The doctrine was laid out in Hubbard's 1950 book, *Dianetics*. The church promises those who join that it will "clear" their spirits through "auditing". Hubbard taught his followers that they were vessels for immortal

souls called Thetans. The enemy of Thetans are Engrams, which can be purged by auditing. An device called the E-meter measures your Engram level.

Scientologists have come under public assault in several countries other than Germany, notably in France, Canada and the US. The sect's standing in America in recent years, however, has recovered somewhat. In part this is because of its successful programmes for instance on drug abuse and graffiti.

It is in Hollywood itself, however, that the church has undoubtedly scored biggest. In the studios of La-La Land, Scientology has become almost trendy. It does not hurt, of course, that among its disciples

are the likes of Tom Cruise, his wife, Nicole Kidman and the other star *du jour*, John Travolta. Others said either to support the church or to be full members of it are Demi Moore, Priscilla Presley, Kirstie Alley and Shirley MacLaine.

Some Germans boycotted Tom Cruise's last blockbuster, *Mission: Impossible*, because of his beliefs. Mr Cruise is a mighty property, however, whom everyone in the industry needs to be seen to be supporting. And there is Mr Travolta. He has publicly attributed his return to success to his membership of the Church of Scientology.

Helmut Kohl may fulminate and sensible thinkers in Europe may be aghast. The friends of Mr Fields – or friends, rather, of Mr Cruise and Mr Travolta – are not likely to be harbouring regrets.



Disciples: Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman are among Hollywood's leading Scientologists

## Angry Germany points to the past

Inna Karacs  
Bonn

Germans of all political persuasions and religious beliefs united yesterday to rebuke the star that their country was conducting a Nazi-style persecution of Scientologists.

"It is disgraceful and irresponsible to draw such historical parallels which are completely out of touch with reality," said Michel Friedman, a board member of the Central Council of Jews in Germany. "It's totally off the mark. Today we have a democracy and a state based on the rule of law. Then it was a dictatorship."

The "open letter" from 34 leading American entertainers, published as an advertisement in the *International Herald Tribune*, drew fire from opposition and government alike. Klaus Kinkel, the Foreign Minister, accused Scientologists of "distorting history".

Rudolf Scharping, the leader of the largest opposition group, the Social Democrats, said: "This letter is not acceptable, especially because of the scandalous comparison of today's



True evil: Germans are outraged at the comparison made with the Nazis

Germany with Hitler's fascist rule."

The commentators agreed that the letter, addressed to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, was in exceptionally bad taste. "They picked the highest address in Bonn and the lowest point in German history," wrote the daily *Die Welt*. "The result is the nastiest public

attack against the Federal Republic."

The republic will survive, but the Church of Scientology's days in Germany may be numbered. Edmund Stoiber, the Prime Minister of Bavaria, promised yesterday to "go after this organisation" with renewed vigour. Bavaria has already banned members

of the sect from state jobs and the teaching profession, a measure which the conservative government in Bonn wants to implement nation-wide. Scientologists, believed to number about 30,000 in Germany, are also excluded from all major parties and several trade organisations.

These measures are already the most repressive in Europe, but the government has mooted further restrictions which would effectively drive the sect underground. There are proposals to place the Church of Scientology under observation, to be watched by an office which keeps track of all extremist groups.

This kind of vigilance is indeed a legacy of the Nazi era, but not in the way that the Hollywood stars understand. Under the Federal Republic's constitution, all organisations which aim to subvert democracy are proscribed.

To Germans, the Scientologists' mind-bending techniques and their habit of radiating their propaganda through prominent personalities smacks of Nazism.

## Making a mighty avalanche out of a snow flurry

It's that time of year again. When grown men glance nervously and constantly at the heavens, when local newscasters adopt a tone suggesting that a few dozen Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles are at that moment headed towards the capital of the free world, and when the populace strips supermarket shelves bare in an attempt to avoid Armageddon. Washington, in other words, is about to receive its first snow of the winter.

After days of advance publicity, the traumatic event occurred on Thursday, closing schools across the region, allowing federal workers to take the day off, and sweeping all other news aside. Now you might

have thought we'd have learnt to handle this sort of thing. Exactly a year ago, the Blizzard of '96 struck, dumping two feet of snow and paralysing the city for a week. That was a truly amazing event, of which our grandchildren will rightly speak in awe. But despite the best efforts of Mayor Marion Barry, and the virtual absence in the bankrupt District of Columbia of a single functioning snow plough, we survived. This time, however, everyone knew in advance it wouldn't be more than two inches. But why let facts get in the way of a media-generated panic?

What makes the fuss doubly absurd is that unlike its British equivalent, Ameri-

can weather is often genuinely exciting. Here there is no need to ponder the difference lovingly drawn by British weather-casters between "sunshine but some scattered showers", and "showers with a few sunny intervals". Last weekend in DC, T-shirts were the order of the hour as the temperature hit a record 23C. Four days later we were 28 degrees cooler. This is a land of climatic extremes, of hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, dustbowls, and Biblical floods. Take the last two weeks out West.

Great swaths of California, Nevada, Oregon and Washington state have been designated disaster areas after once-in-a-century flooding which caused \$2bn (£1.1bn) of damage in California alone. They even had to close the casinos in Reno, Nevada. That is serious.

Out on the northern plains a blast of Arctic air has reduced the temperature in Bismarck, North Dakota, to around -22C. With 30mph winds, the wind chill reading is -60C. But DC's weather forecasters don't men-

tion this truly newsworthy freeze, as they hype the petty inconvenience closer to home. Their advice veers from the bossy to the fatuous. Do drive carefully, wear warmer clothes, allow extra time to get to work. But such statements of the obvious pale beside the pearls dispensed by another of their number. If you go out in the car, he counselled, take emergency supplies, including water, biscuits and tinned food. All this in Metro Washington, one of the most affluent and thickly populated areas in the country, where you're never more than 100 yards from a Volvo station wagon.

And the hysteria will doubtless continue. America being America, safety is

sought in gadgetry and statistics. Since last year, DC has installed a computerised monitoring system that tracks pavement temperatures across the city. No less comforting was news that in the Maryland suburbs, 350 workers spread 56,000 tonnes of salt, while their opposite numbers in northern Virginia had spread a combination of salt and liquid calcium chloride on 13,000 lane-miles of highway by 6am. When you're stuck in the usual commuting traffic jam, such numbers have a wonderfully soothing, hypnotic effect. Who knows, they might even help us over a Russian nuclear attack.

Rupert Cornwell

## We think it's time you went away

### Hotel breaks: 2 nights for the price of 1

The Independent and the Independent on Sunday would like to invite you to take a hotel break and enjoy two nights for the price of one. Simply pay for one night's bed and breakfast and you will get the next night, including breakfast, free. Prices are based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

All the participating hotels are members of the Minotel consortium and many will allow you to enjoy a longer stay on the same basis: pay for two nights and stay for four, for example. You can check this with your chosen hotel when you make your initial reservation.

There are more than 80 Minotel hotels participating in this offer, all of which are located in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. All the hotels offer top-class comfort and pride themselves on providing a personal service that many larger establishments cannot match.

A list of the participating Minotel hotels will be printed in tomorrow's Independent on Sunday and again in Monday's Independent.

**How to Qualify**  
To qualify for your 2 for 1 break you must collect four differently numbered tokens (including at least one from the Independent on Sunday). We are printing nine tokens in The Independent and the Independent on Sunday from Saturday 11 until Sunday 19 January. Then attach them to one of the vouchers we are printing in The Independent on Tuesday 14

January and Saturday 18 January and in the Independent on Sunday on 19 January (a confirmation booking form will also be published on these dates). When you have four tokens and a voucher, simply follow the booking procedure detailed below. If you would like to take more than one 2 for 1 break, just collect four tokens and one voucher for each separate occasion that you wish to go. Today we print Token 1; Token 2 will be printed in tomorrow's Independent on Sunday.

**Booking Procedure**  
1. All bookings must be made by telephone direct with each individual hotel. Callers must identify themselves as "Independent 2 for 1 voucher holders" as some hotels may have standard or superior rooms available at normal rates when their allocation of 2 for 1 rooms is full.  
2. All bookings must be pre-paid and reservations can be confirmed over the telephone by credit card holders at most hotels.  
3. Voucher holders wishing to pay by other methods can make a provisional booking by phone which the hotel will keep open for 48 hours pending receipt of the confirmation booking form and payment which will be acknowledged by the hotel on the day it is received. If you do not receive such an acknowledgement within seven days, you are advised to contact the hotel.  
4. Vouchers must be surrendered on arrival at the hotel and can be used on one occasion only.  
5. Vouchers are valid from 11 January to 30 September 1997.



Pictured today is Chequers Hotel in Pulborough, West Sussex. This country hotel with luxury ensuite rooms, costs from £79 for a double or twin room for one night. This hotel has a highly recommended restaurant, holder of an AA rosette.

#### Terms and Conditions

- To participate in our 2 for 1 offer you must collect 4 differently numbered tokens including one from the Independent on Sunday and attach them to a voucher. If you would like to take more than one 2 for 1 break, just collect four tokens and one voucher for each separate occasion that you wish to go.
- The voucher may be redeemed at any participating Minotel hotel as listed in the Independent on Sunday, 12 January, and The Independent, 13 January for one free night's bed and breakfast for two people in a standard twin or double room when the first night's bed and breakfast is pre-purchased at the price indicated.
- Some hotels, at the proprietor's discretion, will accept the voucher for longer stays on the same basis, so you can stay for 4 nights for the price of 2 for example. Please check with your chosen hotel when making your booking.
- The voucher does not cover payment for any other meals or service that may be requested by the holder and cannot be used with any other offer, saving or discount that may be available at the hotel.
- No bookings will be accepted for Bank holiday periods.
- Bookings for January, February, March and April cannot be made more than 6 weeks in advance. Bookings for May and September cannot be made more than 4 weeks in advance. Bookings for June, July and August cannot be made more than 7 days in advance.
- Vouchers are valid from 11 January to 30 September 1997.
- Vouchers must be surrendered on arrival at the hotel and can be used on one occasion only.
- No-shows or cancellations less than 14 days prior to the anticipated date of arrival at the hotel will render the voucher invalid and the

holder liable for payment in full for each night booked, including those previously offered free.

10. All bookings made under this promotion are subject to availability and to the selected hotel's own period of availability and terms and conditions, except where those conditions may differ from these in which case these conditions shall prevail.

11. Photocopies of tokens and vouchers are not acceptable.

12. One child, under the age of 12 years at the time of booking and sharing a room with two adults will be accommodated free of charge but all meals, including breakfast, will be chargeable.

13. The descriptions and prices contained in this offer have been supplied by participating hotels. While every effort has been made to ensure their accuracy prior to publication, no responsibility can be taken by Newspaper Publishing plc, Charterhouse Promotions or Minotel for any error, omissions or changes that may take place afterwards without notice.



THE INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

صلى الله عليه وسلم



## Tired of playing the waiting game

Why are we waiting? It is now an established tradition for an opposition leader to call, twice a week, for an immediate general election. We think Tony Blair's continuation of this ritual is tiresome. But it occurs to us, at the end of the first week of the long election campaign, to ask the Prime Minister why he thinks there should not be a general election now. We doubt that he can give us one good reason. He might claim that he has a five-year mandate, which has not yet expired. But last November's Queen's Speech confirmed that this is a government that has run out of things to do. His real reasons for hanging on are less elevated. Most importantly, perhaps, he is waiting for something to turn up.

The parallels between John Major and Mr Micawber are instructive. The Conservatives purport to believe in Mr Micawber's simple formula for achieving happiness: that income should exceed outgoings – if only by "ought and expense". But, as the national debt has doubled, they are reduced, like Mr Micawber, to hoping for a windfall. The cause of this sorry state is, as both Mr Major and Mr Micawber have said, "circumstances beyond my individual control".

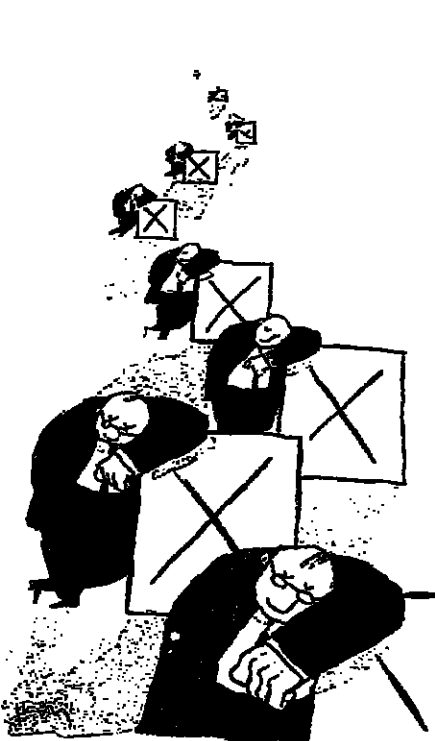
In the end, something did turn up for Mr Micawber, because he is found in the closing pages of *David Copperfield*, relieved of his debts, as a much-esteemed colonial magistrate in Australia. Here the helpfulness of the literary analogy ends. Does this mean Mr Major will be saved by 8 million Halifax customers, grate-

ful that, for them at least, something has turned up – in the form of an average £1,290 hand-out? Or does it mean, perhaps, that Mr Major will end his career as cultural attaché to Tasmania?

It is an intriguing conundrum. Meanwhile, the Tory game plan is to drag it out to the bitter end. If nothing turns up, the hope is that, with the passage of time, more and more people will feel better off. But it is hard to see how Mr Major will get the thanks for the Halifax's bonanza, or any other dividend. All the evidence suggests a radical disconnection between real personal disposable income and government popularity – a link which had been one of the iron laws of British politics. It was broken by a combination of the Tories' breach of trust on taxes and the pound's devaluation out of the ERM in 1992.

The third of Mr Major's calculations is that the longer he plays it, the more the shine comes off Tony Blair's toothy smile and the more difficult it becomes for Labour to travel light into the election. The Labour leader's strategy is already coming under pressure. The fact that the policies on taxing the rich and on electoral reform are not yet firmly nailed to the floor does not inspire confidence that Labour's vessel is ready for the storms of an election campaign.

Mr Major is no doubt fighting the last war, and he remembers that the decisive shift in the 1992 election campaign was the growing expectation that Labour was going to win. Especially in the last week, this focused atten-



tion on Neil Kinnock as a potential prime minister and the policies of his potential government. There is much evidence that weakly attached voters then voted tactically against Labour. Given that most voters already expect a Labour government this time, Lord Saatchi and Brian Mawhinney hope to excite our fears of the unknown in the same way.

The Tory calculations have nothing to do with the national interest, although we welcome the Tory strategy to the extent that it is designed to flush out answers from Mr Blair. But we do not believe in spinning out the process for the sake of it: the eight questions to all parties, which we asked on Tuesday on behalf of the voters, could and should be answered now. Indeed, Mr Major has already answered one, saying he would never take Britain out of the European Union, and Mr Blair gets half a tick for in effect ruling out a 50p top rate of tax.

What's more, there must be serious doubts about whether the Tory strategy will work. If billboard advertising is our equivalent of American television commercials, then the Saatchi and the Tories have trounced Labour in the past, but this week's "New Labour, New Future" campaign, with its red tear motif, seems unlikely to match past successes. There is an emotional artificiality about Dr Mawhinney's campaign which fails to hit home.

That is not to say Labour's response is up to much either, in this first week of what the political operatives call the 17-week "near-

term campaign". Who remembers its poster, only launched the other day: a picture of Mr Major, asserting that he cannot be trusted on the economy after 23 tax rises?

This is the sort of politics that gets us nowhere and puts people off. People don't want a long election campaign. The waiting is tiresome, and too many important things are on hold. The electorate are quite happy to pay attention for a few days and then do their civic duty, but three weeks is a bit much, let alone four months.

So why not call an election for three weeks' time? Then the new government will have a real chance to prepare for the June summit in Amsterdam, which will set the future course of the EU, and politics can move on from its limbo.

The lesson is that there is a strong case for fixed-term parliaments, something which Neil Kinnock advocated at the last election but on which Labour is – as on so many things – silent now. We accept that a definite election date would not shorten the pre-election razzamazzle, but it would allow more certainty and would take away one unjustified advantage of incumbency – the right of the Prime Minister to decide when the country goes to the polls.

Meanwhile, we should ask Mr Major another question in addition to *The Independent's* Eight: what does he hope to achieve for the country rather than his party in the next four months?

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Shepherd's pension changes mean mass exodus of teachers

Sir: It is disingenuous for Gillian Shepherd ("Early teacher retirement is not a right", 9 January) to dress up her proposals on teacher pensions simply as putting "early retirement back on a sensible footing".

The timing of the changes is leading to an employer-encouraged mass exodus of over-50-year-olds who will leave teaching before 1 April 1997, while they are still entitled to a pension. The exodus will play havoc with the education of students and pupils, especially those facing examinations in June and July, and put extra financial pressure on the Teachers' Pension Scheme, when the purpose of the proposed changes is to reduce such pressure. SEB SCHMOLLER  
Sheffield

Sir: Gillian Shepherd argues that it is her duty to ensure that teachers enjoying good health and secure employment should continue in service until they are 60.

However, the Government's proposals would also deny a pension to teachers over 50 who are made compulsorily redundant. These days this is an increasingly likely and frightening prospect for many, since all further education colleges and many schools are independent institutions without the support and resources of a local education authority. Thirty years or so of hard labour in the classroom would then in all likelihood be followed by unemployment and impoverishment.

If she wishes to avoid leaving a legacy of fear and bitterness in the profession, Mrs Shepherd needs urgently to re-examine her proposals to eliminate such injustice. STEVEN TURNBULL  
Torquay, Devon

Sir: Gillian Shepherd is right to observe that schools and colleges will not acknowledge all the costs of premature retirement schemes if costs are pooled rather than assigned to particular schools. But who

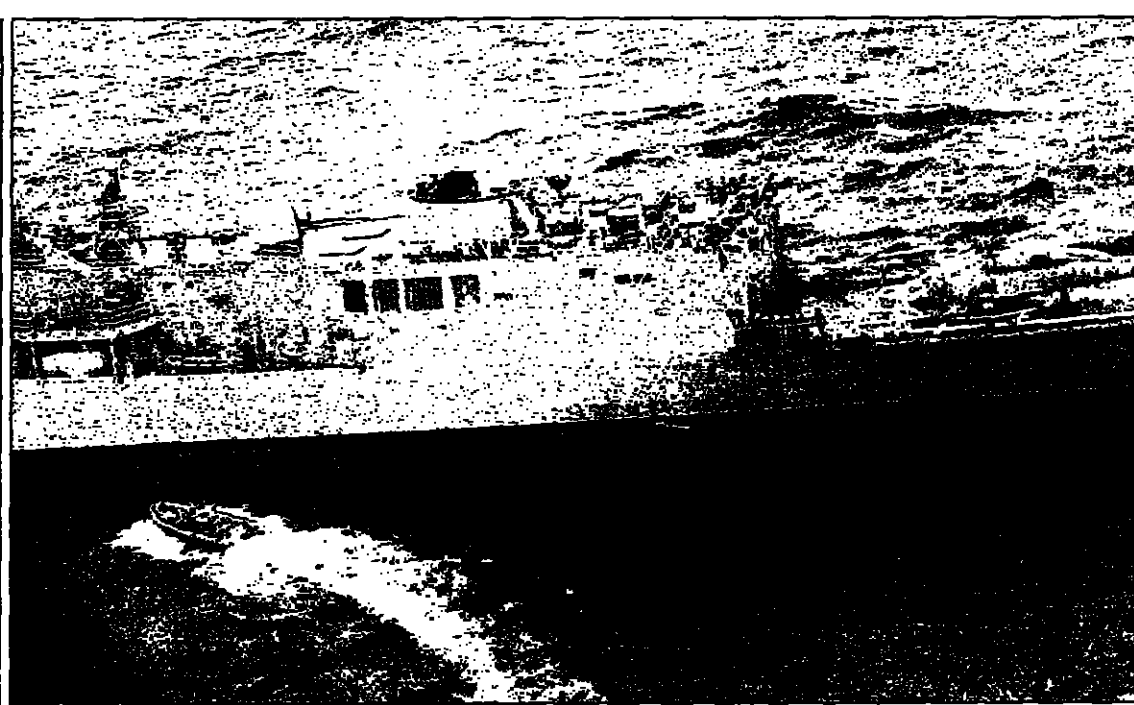
designed the current regime? Conservative governments did so. It is rather rich for a free market orientated politician to lament that schools and teachers acted in their own best interest within a pattern of incentives designed by Conservatives. The problem exists in the form that it does because of the spurious policy of treating educational institutions as though they were firms. JOHN OLIVER  
London EC2

Sir: Over 40 years or more, teachers have paid 6 per cent of their salaries, and their employers more than that, into a "National" Pension Fund. In other words, their pension contributions have disappeared into the public purse, which, until recently, has paid out less than this in pensions, and thereby made a profit.

If those contributions had been invested on behalf of the teachers, instead of being spent, it would seem unlikely that the present shortfall could have occurred. A private pension fund would be legally bound to invest, yet a government is not. GEOFF HINCHCLIFFE  
Theford, Norfolk

Sir: May one ask what right Gillian Shepherd has to use the teachers' sacking pension fund to resource "front-line education"? JAMES WILSON  
Banbury, Oxfordshire

Sir: The Education Secretary expresses disbelief that four out of five teachers opt for retirement before the age of 60. The reasons, they say, cannot be genuine. Clearly they have not even considered the obvious: that the majority of teachers, tired of being told by everyone how second-rate they are, want to get out while they still have the odd shred of self-respect left. MALCOLM BROWN  
Surrey



A rescue dinghy carrying the British yachtsman Tony Bullimore to safety on board the Australian navy frigate HMAS Adelaide on Thursday. Photograph: Reuters

### Warning for those in needless peril on the sea

Sir: In view of the recent incidents involving single-handed sailors off the south-west coast of Australia it is time that the Marine Safety Agency took action to discourage such persons from putting to sea alone for long periods of time.

They clearly cannot comply with the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea, since they are unable to keep a "proper look-out by sight and by hearing" at all times, as required by Rule 5. In addition, no prudent mariner would put themselves in the position of being unable to deal with emergencies on their own craft or to assist others because of lack of personnel. My own experience is that professional mariners do not regard such foolhardy expeditions in a favourable light. BARRY LEAHY  
Master Mariner Cardiff

Sir: If a public subscription were opened to help to repay the Australian government for the costs incurred in the rescue of the British and French sailors, I believe there would be many like myself who would be glad to contribute. The story has been a heart-warming relief from the rest of the news – and the weather – in this awful grey January. MICHAEL ADAMS  
Budleigh Salterton, Devon

Sir: It is fair to ask, you say (leading article, 8 January), whether expensive and commercialised ways of getting your kicks on sea, land and air should be subsidised. No doubt the yachtsmen will speak for themselves, but in the context of mountain rescue the question has been examined by the Scottish Affairs Committee of the House of Commons as recently as last year.

The RAF mountain rescue teams in Scotland, Wales and England are in place to recover crashed aircraft, and if they were prevented from rescuing civilian climbers they would still have to be in place, and would still have to get their weekly training. The civilian teams are self-financing, relying on contributions from their members and other mountaineers, and other fund-raising such as jumble sales. So where is the subsidy? FRANK CARD  
RAF Mountain Rescue Association  
Bainton, Essex

Sir: Of course we're all very pleased that Richard Branson and his crew are safe, but can somebody tell us what happened to the people down below when the six-tonne canister fell on them? FABIAN ACKER  
London SE22

### Quit the City for a high-pressure life

Sir: Hamish McRae's contributions to national debates are always worth a read. In today's article ("Tax on the rich that delivers few votes and less revenue", 10 January), however, he perpetuates the false assumption that working for a charity is less high-pressure than a job in the City.

As a former investment banker who moved to the charity sector three years ago, I can assure you that the challenges faced by charity managers – increasing competition for funds, pressures for improved performance from donors and beneficiaries, anticipating the impact of the rapid changes in the sector's environment in the UK and overseas – lead to as many, if not more, sleepless nights as are suffered by those working in financial services.

What is wholly different is the personal satisfaction that comes from seeing our efforts lead to real improvements in the lives of our beneficiaries rather than to increases in profits, market share or our own wage packet. NIGEL SABBY-SOFFE  
Director of Finance and IT  
Actionaid  
London N19

### Family tyrants

Sir: How can the family be a foundation of democracy, when parents are not elected? SIMON BINNEY  
Cambridge

### Tories to blame for the beggars' plight

Sir: Tony Blair says that homelessness and begging on the streets are not to be tolerated; some commentators see this as an attack on the people who are begging (report, 2 January).

Was I born in a golden age? For 35 years I lived in towns such as Norwich, St Albans and Swindon without seeing a single beggar. Begging was something which happened in the Third World. Then suddenly, within a year or two of the 1987 election, young people began begging on the streets. The effect was to inspire guilt, anger and a feeling that we could not be part of an inclusive prosperous society nor proud to be British.

Tory spokesmen wished us to believe that human nature was at fault (as though it had suddenly changed that year) and that the beggars were idle and feckless people: certainly it could not be connected with the changes in eligibility for the dole of vulnerable young people who moved away from their parents to seek their first job. These changes occurred against the backdrop of a Chancellor transferring money to wealthy and middle-income people in the form of tax cuts.

Through a boom, recession and recovery, the beggars have remained on our streets. The Tories won't change their welfare and housing policy to try to remove the problem, preferring to hold individual beggars

responsible for their predicament. Will New Labour do differently? NICK WATTS  
Chippingham, Wiltshire

Sir: I would heartily agree with Suzanne Moore's article on safer streets (8 January). We need a better, richer street life.

Beggars are an important ingredient – they do not need purging from our streets but should be encouraged to do better. The old baskers who worked the West End theatre queues of the 1950s were part of an honourable and richly inventive tradition with not a guitar among them. The man who made ladders out of rolled-up newspaper, climbing three storeys on a windless day; the bone and spoon man; the woman with the strident voice who sang "Mother McCree" in your ear until you paid her to go away; the three acrobats and a barrel-organ in Leicester Square; the old gent with the wind-up gramophone who did a tap-dance routine. All these, and many more, made street life entertaining, rich and enjoyable.

After all, whatever the police and the bureaucrats do, we shall never really be rid of them, nor can they be confined to tourist areas. The more they are purged the worse will be their performance. Let us encourage them to give us good entertainment. FR MICHAEL DAY  
London E5

### Brazil: making ancestral lands secure

Sir: Whilst it is true that the Brazilian government should "put more resources into ensuring that indigenous lands are respected" as advocated in the article "Tribes who won't see the forest for the sleaze" (4 January), the key solution is one of land ownership. Brazil remains the only country in Latin America which does not recognise indigenous peoples' right to own their land. If Indians in Brazil are ever going to live in security on their ancestral lands, recognition of communal title is the fundamental prerequisite.

In Peru, for example, many indigenous communities have acquired communal land title around their villages and are in control of their territory; this has greatly reduced numbers of non-

Indians invading and colonising their land.

In Brazil all too often powerful landowners and companies use the courts to obtain or uphold dubious title within Indian land, which constitutionally belongs to the state. One shocking example has just occurred in the south of Brazil, where a cattle rancher claiming title has forcibly evicted a community of Guarani Indians from an area demarcated as indigenous by the federal authorities. Banished to living in shacks by the roadside, the Indians now face a potentially long drawn-out battle in the courts in a climate of intimidation. STEPHEN CORRY  
Director General  
Survival  
London WC1

### Free Ashmolean

Sir: Despite having spent four months in Oxford, Professor Larsen (letter, 7 January) has clearly not visited the Ashmolean Museum, otherwise he would have discovered that, despite what he claims, it is free of charge to all visitors at all times.

We have no current plans for introducing charges. Professor CHRISTOPHER WHITE  
Director  
Ashmolean Museum  
Oxford

### Prison searches

Sir: The governor of Birmingham prison had instructed his staff to search visitors on the same basis as prison staff, that is to say, periodically ("Anger at search exemption for prison chiefs", 7 January).

Although all visitors and staff are searched when entering high-security prisons, Birmingham does not fall into that category, and procedures vary according to security circumstances. Ann Widdecombe has visited more than 100 prisons while Prisons Minister, and is regularly searched. A J PEARSON  
Director of Security and Programmes  
HM Prison Service  
London SW1

## LETTER from THE EDITOR

With the election campaign in effect begun, those readers who have decided to remain in the country are already starting to attack us for being either pathetically pro-Labour or dumbly pro-Conservative. Since the letters are arriving at a similar rate and since I have been again informed by senior people in all the parties that *The Independent* is regarded as "unfriendly", it seems to me that we are probably – on balance, and not every day – about right.

Yet we are biased, of course – in editorials, on the comment pages, and in cartoons. We are biased towards our own agenda, which has grown with the paper, and which is based on political reform, free markets and pro-Europeanism. Those views, argued in detail in numerous leaders, provide a template against which we can measure the parties' positions.

And then what? First, this paper will never tell its readers how to vote – that is a patronising, offensive habit, which assumes that newspaper readers are docile mental serfs to be shooed into one pen or another.

But second, I think we should come to some kind of collective conclusion by the end of the campaign – how we would use our vote if we had one. That doesn't mean we become a party paper, any more than a thoughtful, independent-minded voter who finally plumps one way or another on polling day necessarily becomes a party supporter from then on. But after years of finger-stabbing on every other issue, it seems a little odd to suddenly turn coy on this one.

Not yet, though – despite a moment at the beginning of the week when it seemed as if we were going to have to come off the fence. Tony Blair was reported to have converted to voting reform, which is a key *Independent* issue, and the main missing element of Labour reformism. How could we pretend to be neutral between two sides, one of which was radically reformist and pro-European and the other of which wasn't? A nervous moment, with a slight squirm of trousered buttock on this one.

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editorial chair-leather. Then Mr Blair denied it all.

One of the most engaging complaints of the week arrived unsigned and without an address. It purported to be from Aaaacel, or the Association for the Advancement of American English in European Culture.

The pith of the communication runs thus: "Hi there. Congratulations, you're the kinda person we would like to thank for all your help... Here's merely a few of our successes which YOU have made possible, just by saying: Guy, Movie, Smart, Railroad, Jerk, Vacation, Butt, Garbage, Trunk, Hood, Sunup, Sundown, and so on... So keep up the good work and with YOUR help, the crappy dead English of Milton, Elliot, Lawrence, Wolf,

Since all the parties regard us as 'unfriendly', it seems to me that we are, on balance, probably about right

Speight, Wood and so many more will be dead and buried." Alert (smart) readers will have detected a note of irony, which may or may not relate to the misspellings of two of the Great Names. (And which Wood, by the way?)

There are two things that need to be said about Americanish. The first is that it is very irritating, but the second is that it is, in some cases, irresistible. Language, like culture, is a struggle for survival between the strong and the weak, the centre and the periphery. It's a struggle which dialects and whole languages are constantly losing. The price we pay for speaking a successful world language (unlike, say, Dutch) is that it is constantly changed and eroded at home by how it is used elsewhere. Linguistically, there are many worse fates than that.

Andrew Marr

### QUOTE UNQUOTE

No director is a god. If he's a god, or a tyrant or an autocrat, or a master then he is actually stopping the creative processes happening, because he limits where things may go – Sir Peter Hall  
As soon as paint starts flying around, I will probably forget what happened – Lisa Potts, teacher, 21, on her return to school six months after she battled to save pupils from a machete attacker  
I wouldn't go into space if you paid me. There is quite enough otherness here on our planet for me to get immersed in – David Bowie, rock star, 50

He was such a gent to everybody that we couldn't get cross with him. He was dead straight about why he was mining: he needs the money – Anne Scargill, after leading a protest against open cast mining to Chatsworth, Derbyshire, home of the Duke of Devonshire

I had no choice but to drop all pretence at restraint and courtesy. I determined that if I did not fight bare-knuckle, the pro-monarchy view would be crushed into submission – Frederick Forsyth, best-selling author, on the *Carlton TV* monarchy debate  
In politics you sometimes despair of having a sensible debate – Tony Blair

I think men believe what they see in the movies – that I am going to throw my head back and have an orgasm in two minutes. I have never done that. It is implausible – Sharon Stone, film star



## the saturday story

## As old as yesterday's newspapers

After longer than anyone can really remember, two ancient institutions of the press – Peregrine Worsthorne and Bernard Levin – are hanging up their quills. Peter Popham looks at the passing of a way of life

The gutters of Fleet Street ran with tears this week when the news that first Sir Peregrine Worsthorne of the *Sunday Telegraph*, then Bernard Levin of *The Times*, were departing their ancient, hoary, legendary, prickly, abusive, provocative, preposterous, exhibitionistic, barnacle-encrusted, and not necessarily always extremely widely read columns.

Well they didn't actually – the gutters, that is. Fleet Street (you may have noticed, or not) is no more. It is only a figure of speech, and a misleading one at that. So this week no community of hacks gathered at El Vino's with the perfect excuse for a few extra rounds. No gloating wakes were held. Gossip trundled around the town, but its bearers were probably sober, and the medium mostly telephonic.

The *Times*'s editor, Peter Stothard, has finally heeded the chorus of voices which has been telling him for some time that Levin's column had gone off (though he "will continue to write elsewhere in *The Times*", we are assured). Worsthorne was brutally fired by *Sunday Telegraph* editor Dominic Lawson earlier this week. He got news of his sacking by letter – with a week's notice after 44 years on the *Telegraph* papers. It was the culmination of a long series of disagreements: Worsthorne allegedly vetoed Lawson's attempt to join the Beefsteak club, and was himself ejected from the board of *The Spectator* in 1995, when it was edited by Lawson, after publicly

condemning an article in the magazine. Fleet Street, then, is dead, and two of its most enduring monuments are no more. As journalists are wont to do, we conduct a rough head count of the poor old buffers still on side, tot up how much longer we ourselves can seriously expect to be smiled on, and mourn the passing of an era.

For anyone under 40 or even 50, the amazing thing about Worsthorne (73 now) and Levin (68) is how incredibly long ago they got started. I am 45, and Levin was already famous before I was out of short trousers. As "Taper" in *The Spectator*, he shot to stardom in the 1950s by practically inventing single-handedly the idea of a parliamentary report that was chock full of gags. He then moved to *The Daily Mail* and became its fierce, fiery, fearless theatre critic, in the days when Kenneth Tynan on *The Observer* and Harold Hobson on the *Sunday Times* had made the theatre review the sexiest spot in the paper.

It was around this time, staying up daintily late one Saturday night, that I first became aware of Bernard Levin's existence when he lambasted some particularly disgusting political wrong in a stand-up spot on the satirical show *That Was the Week that Was*. Perhaps this was the occasion when he called prime minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home a cretin – I forget. Anyway, that ephemeral moment was scorched onto the nation's brain pan when a man from the audience got up out of his seat, walked on to the set

and punched Levin in the face. It later emerged that he was the husband of an actress Levin had cruelly rubbished in one of his terrifying reviews. The assault, the man said, was his protest against corrupt theatre criticism.

That was Levin back then: the gaffly, gaffly, into the relatively gentle, benign, backscratching world of London journalism of the 1950s, a clubbable place where satire was something by Juvenal you'd translated at school, and humour was of the whimsical Beachcomber variety, angry young Levin exploded, scattering vituperation in all directions: initially at practically anyone in power, subsequently at anyone else who got up his nose – lawyers, judges, academics, animal rights campaigners, whoever. He introduced a new pleasure into the newspaper reader's life: vicious cruelty.

Peregrine Worsthorne was also firing on all cylinders by the

dawn of the Sixties, having moved to the *Telegraph* in 1953 after working on the *Glasgow Herald* and *The Times*. He joined the *Sunday Telegraph* when it started up in 1961, as deputy editor – a position he held for 25 years, before briefly becoming editor.

It is a little odd and counter-intuitive to yoke Worsthorne and Levin together in an article, despite their emergence at roughly the same time, because they are very different types. Levin was one of the first Jews in post-war British journalism to fashion a persona – brilliant, prickly, shrill, gratuitously aggressive – which could be taken as a red rag by anti-semites. Worsthorne, child of Belgian bankers on one side and English aristocrats on the other, by contrast presented himself as the last, defiant voice of the ruling class. Yet in this very difference there are points in

common, a combination of courage, exhibitionism and perversity. Both were almost equally provocative, for totally different reasons.

Worsthorne's politics had a consistency to which Levin seems never to have aspired. In the days when one-nation Conservatism was the only type there was, and liberalism, modernism and progress were the common cant of all the parties, Worsthorne was shockingly out of tune, lamenting the passing of the old days and railing at the new barbarism.

He was an entirely preposterous figure, like something out of an early Waugh novel or a Coward play. The only reason it worked was that behind the unacceptable rhetoric was a figure of intriguing weirdness, who for all his insistence on Old England and its values hardly seemed English at all in many important respects: a flop, noted for his pink bow ties and red socks, his swept back hair

and finely chiselled nostrils, a man who would often burst into tears in public, whose Englishness often seemed a hilarious camp performance.

By the early Sixties, both these personae were firmly in place, firmly entrenched in the public mind. In the 35-odd years since then a great deal has changed. Newspapers, proprietors, technologies, trade unions, ideologies and the Berlin Wall have come and gone. Fleet Street itself, the vortex of British journalism for 200 years, has been turned over to bankers and the like. The whole context in which those voices, those images, that vituperative rhetoric came into existence has been blown away. Nothing of it remains. But Levin (established for many years now on *The Times*) and Worsthorne have remained, lonely, gesturing figures ranting away on the blasted plain.

The later Worsthorne is more readily admired than the

later Levin. With the successive victories of Mrs Thatcher, Worsthorne's perennial view gradually became almost part of the consensus, and he wound up as a knight. But he has always been uncomfortable having too many people agreeing with him: an old friend recalls that he used to go into El Vino's in Fleet Street, stay long enough to gather the general consensus on the hot topic of the moment, then go away and write the diametrical opposite.

So basking in the Thatcherite sunshine was not something that this soul of perversity could stand doing indefinitely. Later he began rumbling about the "bourgeois triumphalism" of the Eighties; more recently still (on 15 December 1996) he has gone much further, championing Kenneth Clarke to be the Tories' next leader – and this in the lions' den of Europhobia. But Worsthorne has always had a streak of reckless courage: when Conrad Black took over as the *Telegraph*'s proprietor, he wasted no time describing him in print as "domineering, verbose and discouragingly pious."

Levin's progress, despite the huge fame he enjoys around the world, has been less sure. The ferocity that marked him out died long ago, and recent attempts to revive it have an air of desperation: in September, for example, he began a column with 109 consecutive adjectives – "worm-eaten, exhausted, dishonest" etc, etc – to describe the Government. More often though he is seen in his pipe-and-slippers mode, uttering unexceptionable remarks such as "I have always admired Frank Field. His work is sensible and honest..." or "Australians are open and immediately friendly." Too often in Levin's recent articles there is the sensation of someone talking rather pointlessly to himself – less Speakers Corner than one of the more depressing creations of Samuel Beckett.

In that respect Levin's fate is exemplary. Today all these people – Worsthorne in his perfect country village, Levin in London, the rest of us bent over our screens in office blocks dotted across the metropolis – we're all alone. More than any other department of journalism, column-writing is public speaking. It thrived in the era when journalists met and talked and drank. When that era ended, as the careers of Levin and Worsthorne demonstrate, it went into a long stagnation. Today it is ever more forced, artificial, narcissistic.



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Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to send a message to a Bosnian mother, please send it with your donation and we will put it in your baby box. Please send to: Children's Aid Direct, Dept 500, FREEPOST, Reading, RG1 1HR.

Children's Aid Direct

## jo brand's week

Recent tragedies involving ecstasy have resulted in oversensitivity on the part of many adults, as demonstrated by the recent Polo furore. Polo manufacturers were delighted when they came up with the idea of selling a limited edition of the discarded holes with the letters P, L or O on them. Having the appearance of small white pills, various teachers became alarmed and contacted poison units round the country, with the result that these little sweets were put on a national database. This illustrates, yet again, the gulf that exists in the perception that grown-ups and younger people have of drugs.

I have had a bash at most drugs and as a teenager was told by someone about making tea out of cigarettes for asthmatics. They had benzadrine in them and gave you a good buzz. I mentioned it to a friend of mine who made some and consequently tried to jump out of a window. This fact was reported to my parents, who went absolutely bonkers and from that point on, I fear, suffered terrible visions of me lying in the gutter with a syringe sticking out of my arm. I personally knew this would never happen, but it's hard to convince your mum and dad of that when you're 15. Under-thensies will never stop taking drugs, and

unfortunately, education, not blanket prevention, is the only way forward.

A study in New York has discovered that shopping is good for women's health. Dr Rex Metzler claimed that the sheer pleasure of making personal purchases does something positive for a woman's system and seems to give temporary immunity from ageing. So apparently shopaholics are often stronger and slimmer. The study showed that it was best to shop about 17 hours a week – especially for clothes.

This sounds like a right load of cobblers to me. Maybe Dr Rex is in cahoots with some of the big department stores. He also sounds like some doctor out of a Woody Allen film, sending his patients off on marathon spending sprees to cure their middle-class ennui.

I'm sure most women don't have enough money to last 17 hours a week. Even if they did, I'd like to think that the vast majority couldn't bear to spend that amount of time indulging in such an empty pursuit. Still, anything to keep them on the streets.

The Tory MP Jerry Hayes seems to have been well and truly destroyed, whether the reports of his affair with a Commons researcher turn out

to be true or not. For if they are true, yet another "happily married man" will be revealed as something we never thought he was. Many people see this as the ultimate humiliation for Mr Hayes. Obviously they never saw him on the James Whale show.

As the Tories know, the problem with setting yourself up as a shining example for others to follow is that when you get caught out, that proverbial substance really hits the fan. So it was this week, when Turkish police allegedly found Mushm Gunduz, leader of a radical Islamic sect, in flagrante with a young girl. The woman maintains that Gunduz has used hundreds of girls as sex slaves.

This is a true case of having your cake and eating it: not to mention "don't do as I do, do as I say". As usual, it is the poor old women and the weak and

helpless that have to sit back and take the abuse while the powerful please themselves.

What a gloriously revealing bunfight the debate about the monarchy was on Tuesday night. Please remind me never to read a Frederick Forsyth novel again. What an unpleasant man.

Peter Stringfellow, (knock me down with a feather) a supporter of the monarchy, arguing fiercely that it is good for tourism, and made the point that if the monarchy was abolished there would still be poverty. Of course there would, Pete, because money-grabbing businessmen like you would still exist. Royal Family first; you next, mate. I reckon.

I am not sure that the programme would be graced with the name "debate." It was more like *Gladiators*, with the expectation on my

part that at any moment, as another person with unpopular opinions was shouted down, the chant "Another One Bites The Dust" would strike up in the background. The heckling was of the usual sub-standard nature and the arguments were simplistic. A triumph of *Sunesque* trivia.

Scotland was the only republican area at the end of the night. Another temptation – along with the deep-fried Mars Bars – to move up there.

"Boys will be boys." This cliché is chuckled about whenever a good old bloke sets off on an adventure from which he might not return – a dangerous climb, a land speed record or indeed a round-the-world balloon flight. In my book, the sort of tests to be admired are those of kindness, generosity and fairness. I'd have been a lot more impressed if Richard Branson had used the balloon wages or something of that nature. Now the mission has failed and another load of money has dribbled down the drain. Popular opinion may be that it's his money and he can do what he wants with it. That doesn't stop some of us thinking it's a crime to chuck it away on what amounted to an almost instantaneous failure.



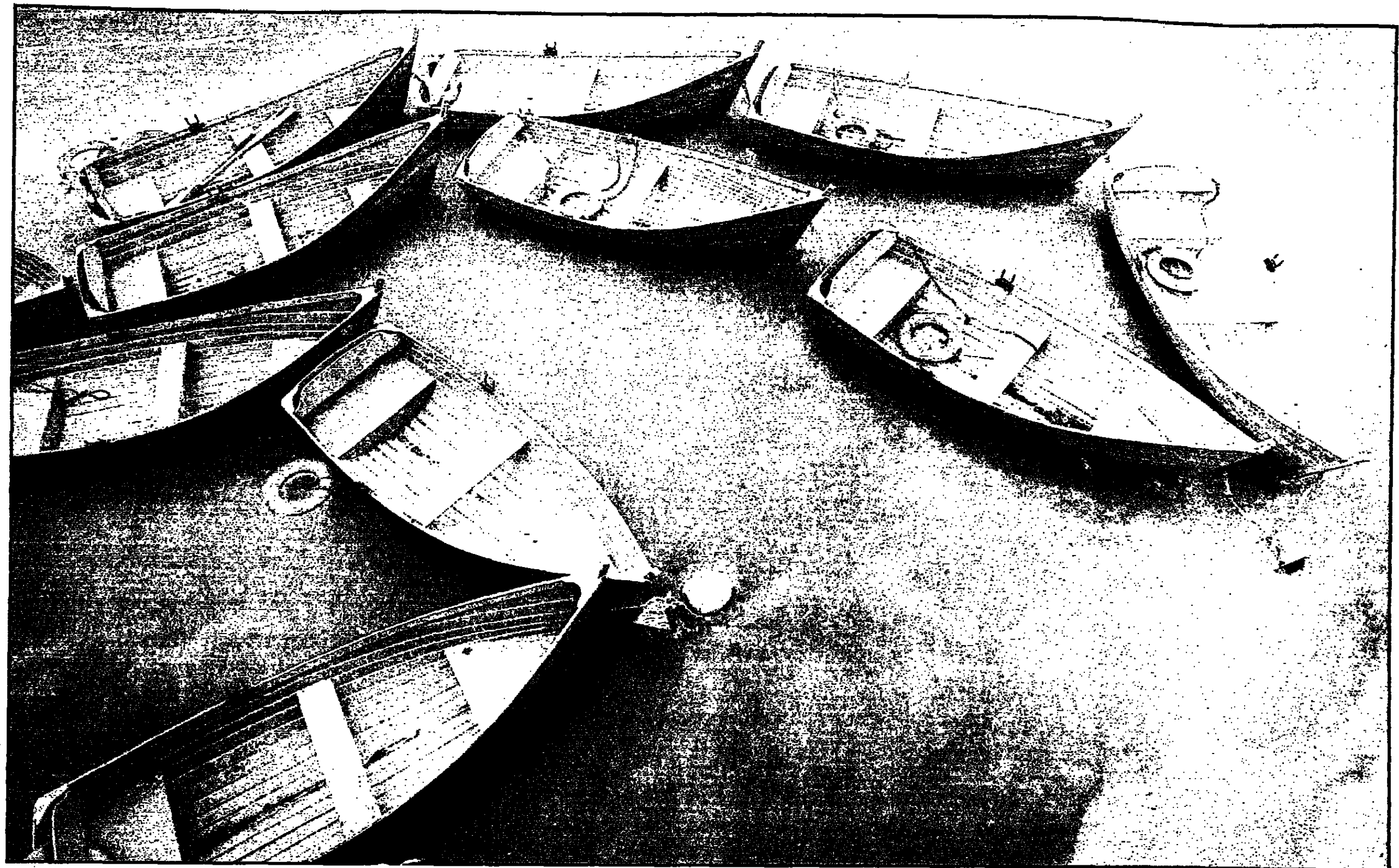
One day – when I was a teenager – I decided to have my personality tested. For weeks I had passed the odd-looking bookshop near Goudge Street Tube station, on London's Tottenham Court Road, which advertised on-the-spot analysis. Perhaps it was the luridly illustrated science-fiction paperbacks in the window, or the insistent manner with which the man in the doorway invited youngsters (always youngsters) to come inside. That put me off. And then, in a fit of self-confidence, I went inside and filled in the interminable questionnaire about holes in my life (none, unfortunately), spiritual emptiness (also absent) and my longing for completeness (incomplete).

Someone in the shop took a quick shift, looked me up and down and bade me farewell. And thus ended my only brush with the Church of Scientology.

Had I been slightly more promising material, I would have been slowly drawn into sessions of self-exploration. Gradually truths (as witnessed by Scientology's founder, L Ron Hubbard, sci-fi author and honorary Venusian) would have been revealed to me. I would have come to know how evil Lord Xenu filled the world with alien Engrams some 75 million years ago, how these

صكتان الامم





**IMAGE OF THE WEEK** Normally they bob around in carefree summer days loaded with be-shorted, shirt-sleeved sun-lovers. Now, as the country stays locked into the New Year - New Ice Age, the boats, on the Serpentine in London's Hyde Park, stay wedged by the ice into a frozen arc. Photograph by Tony Buckingham. Taken with a Canon EOS 50E 24mm lens using a Kodak multi-speed film. 1/60 seconds at F/11

# the long weekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 11 JANUARY 1997

The narrator of Beryl Bainbridge's *Every Man for Himself* (published by Duckworth) is Morgan, the young nephew of the shipping line's owner, who sails on the Titanic's maiden voyage in April 1912. In this extract from the first chapter, he accompanies his friend Charlie Melchett on a trip around the new liner.

Melchett was keen on visiting E deck, mostly on account of a broad alleyway, known to the crew by the name of Scotland Road after some street in Liverpool, which ran the length of the vessel.

He had visited the northern city as a child, he eagerly told me, on the occasion of a horse running in his grandfather's colours in the Grand National steeplechase. I did tell him, knowledgeable as I was in regards to plumbing in the steerage accommodation, that it was unlikely he would find the thoroughfare thronged with race-horses, but he was adamant.

We duly descended by elevator and roamed up and down a tiled corridor intersected by iron staircases leading to working departments of indescribable dullness. Melchett, trying hard to remain animated, wilted.

"What is the point," he complained, "of giving names to places that bear no resemblance to the past?"

"The point is," I stressed, "that they draw attention to the origin of the reference. Think of Waterloo station." After which exchange we fortunately encountered a young seaman who was persuaded to conduct us over the lower decks. Reluctant at first, then swayed by the promise of a generous tip, he led us below.

Though stunted in growth, his eyes shone with intelligence. He said his name was Riley and his home town Liverpool, where he lived with his "Mam" and five siblings. Considerably bucked at the coincidence, Melchett boasted he knew the town quite well. "My grandfather," he said, "owned a horse that finished second in the Grand National of 1901... I can't for the life of me remember its name."

"Me Dad," replied Riley, "had a donkey called Dickey-Sam that pulled a rag and bone cart." Melchett said that was interesting, and turned pink again. Apart from a certain casualness of manner Riley proved to be the best of guides. For though the English he spoke could have benefited from an interpreter his knowledge of the ship was profound and his appreciation infectious. On F deck, starboard side, beneath which the main engines were housed, he delivered a lecture on their capacity and capabilities. The vessel, I understood him to inform us, was powered by two four-cylinder,

## WORDS OF THE WEEK

Every week we open this section with a picture to admire, to treasure. From today we will also offer words - spoken, declaimed, written as poetry or prose - which will in some way reflect an event or mood of the week. Today, an extract from the Whitbread Award-winning novel by Beryl Bainbridge



triple expansion, reciprocating steam engines. Each could deliver 15,000 horsepower at 75 revolutions, producing a speed of 21 knots. Aft of these, a low-pressure turbine recycled steam from the main engines to drive the three propellers. He was wrong in this last assumption, in that it was only the central propeller that was thus driven, but I held my tongue.

"There's also four 400 kilowatt steam-powered generators," he said, "with dynamos capable of providing enough electricity to work the machinery control-

ling the winches, cranes, passenger and service lifts, heaters, cookers, water-tight doors, the internal telephone exchange and the Marconi wireless set to a range of 350 miles. It can go further at night," he concluded. "Though I'm buggered if I know why." Melchett, shamelessly taking advantage of his enthusiasm, pressed to be allowed a glimpse of such wonders. A glimpse was all we got; barely a minute after we reached G deck and Riley had dragged back the iron door of Number 1 engine room we were approached by an assistant engineer and ordered about our

business. Brief as the moment had been, we had nonetheless clearly seen the awesome monster rearing on splayed legs from the glittering avenue below, its gigantic head vibrating inside its steel helmet, its thunderous intestines of lubricated pistons and crank-shafts pounding and pumping in perpetual motion.

Riley was sent packing. I'm ashamed to say neither Melchett nor I put in a word for him, nor was there time to palm him his tip. Escorted by the engineer, we were returned by twists and turns and much tapping up of metal stairs to E deck, where, after sternly reminding us that unauthorised explorations of engine and boiler rooms were against company safety rules, he left us.

I could have told him who I was and put him in his place but was loath to puncture his sense of self-importance, having had my own pricked on numerous occasions, and with more cause, by my Uncle Morgan.

Melchett and I remained silent while we continued our inspection of the ship, and when it was done and we had sunk into the leather armchairs in the foyer of A deck we still had no words.

It wasn't the lavish furnishings of the public rooms, the doors inlaid with mother of pearl, the panelled corridors of oak and maple, the shimmer of gilt and brass and cut glass that made us catch our breath, anymore than the twenty-one-light candelabra hung from the massive dome above the sweep of that imperial staircase.

We had spent our lives in splendid houses and grand hotels and for us there was nothing new under the sun, nothing that is, in the way of opulence; it was the sublime thermodynamics of the Titanic's marine engineering that took us by the throat. Dazzled, I was thinking that if the fate of man was connected to the order of the universe, and if one could equate the scientific workings of the engines with just such a reciprocal universe, why then, nothing could go wrong with my world.

I don't know what Melchett was thinking, beyond he was pale and his left knee was bouncing up and down as though in imitation of those connecting rods oscillating below the water line.



**John Walsh meets... Michael Flatley**  
'Dance is about focusing. Focus focus focus' page 3

**Nureyev: shedding light on darkness**  
TV documentary is too slanted says John Percival page 4

**All across the nation...**  
Hippy, happy daze in San Francisco page 9

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# Bump-starting a stalled pseudo-science

Modern discoveries are attracting new converts to the ancient art of phrenology

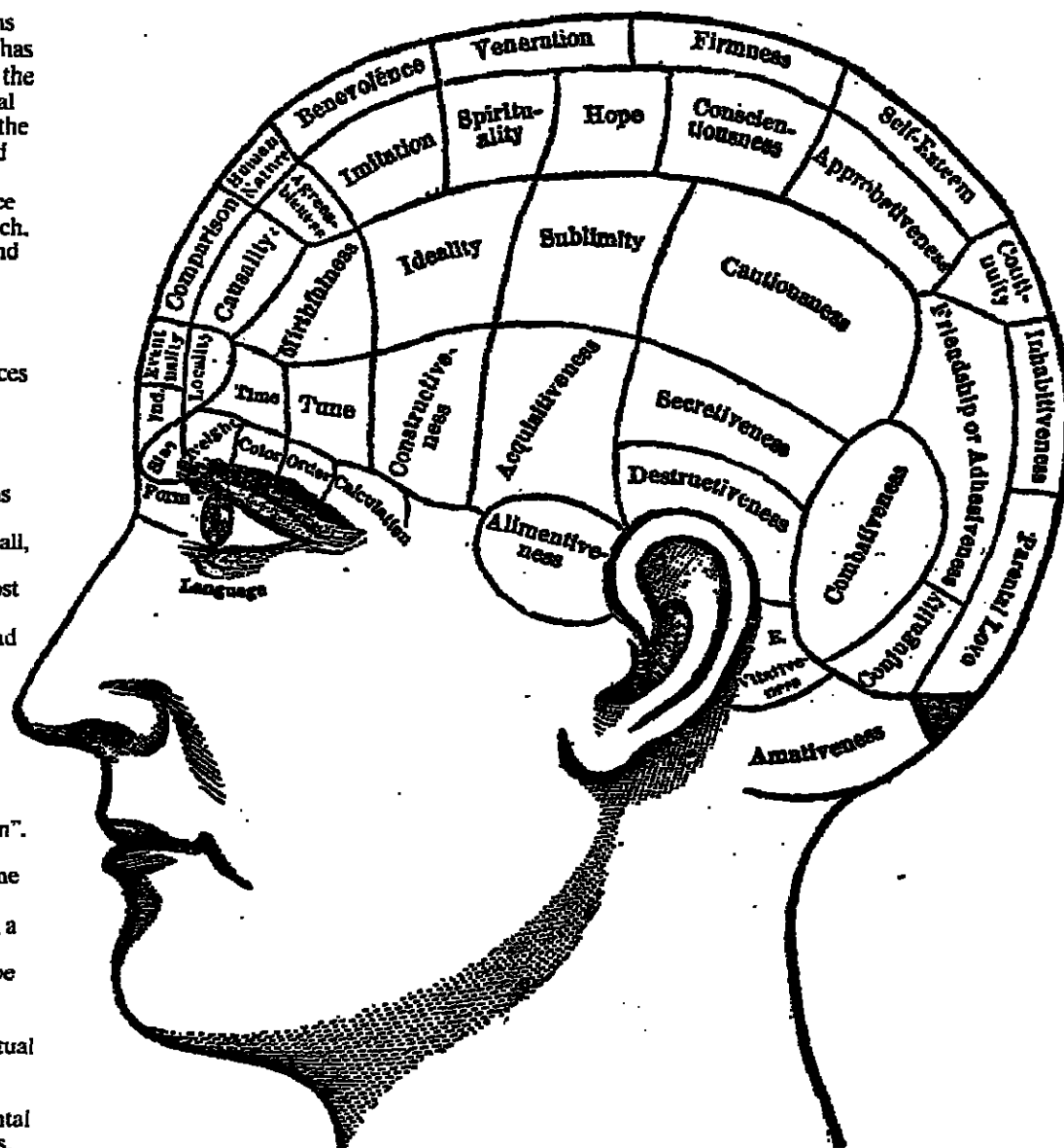
The discovery, earlier this week, that women's brains shrink during pregnancy has drawn attention again to the relationship between the physical characteristics of the brain and the psychological characteristics and capacities of its owner. Such questions were once the province of the old art of phrenology which, to judge by a quick search around the more dubious nooks of the Internet is making a bit of a comeback. Indeed, our by no means exhaustive browse revealed more than 600 references to phrenology on the Web.

For the benefit of the phrenological neophyte, here is how it works:

The science of phrenology was developed in Austria in the late 18th century by Franz Joseph Gall, one of the founders of modern neurology. At a time when almost nothing was known about the functioning of the brain, Gall had the amazing insight that different regions of the brain were responsible for different faculties. He even identified the cerebral cortex as "the highest level of the brain and that the development of this area characterised mammals and man". Where he seems to have erred, however, was in his belief that the brain comprised many several distinct organs, each controlling a separate aspect of personality.

As Douglas Adams fans will be pleased to hear, the full phrenological system identifies precisely 42 "moral and intellectual faculties" as Gall called them.

Here's the official list: Amativeness, Conjugality, Parental Love, Friendship, Inhabitiveness, Continuity, Vitativeness, Combativeness, Destructiveness, Alimentiveness, Acquisitiveness, Secretiveness, Cautiousness, Approbateness, Self-Esteem, Firmness, Conscientiousness, Hope & Expectation, Spirituality, Veneration, Benevolence, Constructiveness, Ideality, Sublimity, Imitation, Mirthfulness, Individuality, Form, Size, Weight, Colour, Order, Calculation, Locality, Eventuality, Time, Tune, Language, Causality, Comparison, Human nature, Agreeableness.



Every one of those was identified with a specific site in the brain, and the assumption of phrenology was that superior development of any of the faculties would be revealed by the contours of the cranium.

So, having learnt where everything is, you have only to inspect people's heads in the proper manner to discover their innermost secrets. Here's how you start:

Place the third finger of each hand upon

the head, just at the top of the ears; let the lower side of the third finger be even with the upper part of the ear; that finger then rests upon Destructiveness. Then spread the second finger about one eighth of an inch from the other, and it will rest upon Secretiveness. Let the end of your longest finger come as far forward as the fore part of the ears, and they will then rest upon these two organs.

(From a mid-19th century manual on

phrenology by Orson Squire Fowler and Lorenzo Niles Fowler.)

Even though its fundamental basis became increasingly undermined by psychological and neurological research, phrenology continued to be practised until the 1930s, by which time Americans could even have their head bumps read by an automatic electrical phrenology machine which printed out a report on ticker-tape.

Considering the continuing appeal of astrology, and the growth in academically doubtful methods of character assessment such as graphology, the almost complete demise of phrenology is perhaps surprising. It has, after all, only three major defects:

Firstly, there was never much evidence to support the view that the contours of the brain follow the bones of the skull as closely as the phrenologists would have liked. Secondly, in the brain, as in other organs, there is little evidence to correlate size with efficacy. And thirdly, Gall and his followers seem to have got their bumps in the wrong place. For example "Broca's area", now known to be responsible for language, is nowhere near Gall's Language bump, but seems to lie somewhere between Constructiveness and Ideality.

So Phrenology is based on two false premises, which, even if they were correct, would be giving out quite the wrong results anyway.

There are, however, two good things about phrenology. The first, and best, is that it provides an excellent excuse for fondling the head of someone whom you would like to get to know better. After mastering palmistry in order to indulge in a little harmless hand-caressing, phrenology is the next logical step for any shy chromantic suitor to take.

For the less tender-hearted, however, we must mention the newly developed technique of "Phrenotherapy". The idea of this "bold new discipline", as its inventor Kevin Kelm describes it, is to improve people's personalities by rearranging their head bumps. With a mallet. Do not try this at home.

## Games People Play

Pandora Melly explores an explorer's pastimes.

Michael Alexander, 76, explorer and writer

I've just been given an outrageous little book for Christmas about the games played by Surrealists. "How do you reconcile a love for women with a taste for sodomy?" That was a question put to Paul Eluard by Guy Tanguy, but there are some good limericks in there too.

I make up limericks about my friends. Listen to this one: "A dirty old vicar from Chester/laid hands on a choirgirl and blessed her/in order to test her/he pressed and caressed her/'til they came to arrest the molester."

I have several friends who make up limericks; an American girl in Paris, she's made up some quite good ones, and an Italian friend who's a diplomat. He writes them all down. You should see his book, he's got lots of them, he collects them, you see.

I can't remember exactly when I started writing them - far too long ago - but I have sessions with

friends at the Chelsea Arts Club. Here's another one: "There was a young girl from Ceylon/who locked herself up in the john/when they knocked down the door/she was flat on the floor/and they found she'd not been but she'd gone."

Edward Lear's not terribly good; he doesn't bother much with first and last lines. It's better to get some internal rhyming, then it's a minor art form. This one's my favourite: "There was a young man from Bengal/who went to a fancy dress ball/he thought he would risk it/and go as a biscuit/but a dog ate him up in the hall." Not one of mine, but I've always liked it. I can see it all happening, can't you? I'm afraid I've become a bit of a limerick bore. You know, rattle them off, and don't let the other man get his limerick in.

In case of failed inspiration "The Penguin Book of Limericks", edited by E. O. Parrott, is available from any good bookshop for £3.99.

## Don't junk it ... use it

Poaching eggs with tuna left-overs

Which would you rather have:

Two pastry cutters, one mousse ring, four muffin rings and an egg ring; or:

Two pastry cutters, one mousse ring, four muffin rings, an egg ring, a safety can opener, 1.395kg of tuna and £6.79?

The trick is to buy the tin-opener (a Culinaire Safety Can Opener costing about £6 is needed for this job) then make the other kitchen items out of empty tuna tins (or any other suitably shaped tins with proper rims at the top and bottom). You just remove the tops and bottoms of the tins for your ready-made



Poached egg à la tuna can

pastry-cutters, egg rings, mousse rings and muffin rings.

The budget above is based on prices quoted in a current "Chef's Choice" catalogue.

Bawn O'Beirne-Ranelagh



Henry VIII popped in for a game at the second Mary Rose Backgammon Tournament at the Hilton Hotel, Portsmouth last weekend. The prize, won by Nick Check of London, was this replica backgammon board, based on one recovered intact, complete with counters, from the wreck of the Mary Rose. The board was made by Chris Woolcott, King Henry's friend is Michael Crane of the British Isles Backgammon Association.

The Games Page is edited by William Hartston

## New game of the week

Board games in general fall into five categories: there are race games, war games, acquisition games, knowledge games and partnership games. Ludo, chess, Monopoly, Scrabble and bridge. *Compatibility* from Spear's (price £19.99), falls into the last category and is typical of the genre in that it provides a framework for pairs of friends to become furious with each other.

The rules are simple: a word is selected at random from the "topic cards", and each player must then select, from their pack of "Compatibility cards" a number of pictures they consider most appropriate to the topic. You score points if you turn out to have selected the same pictures as your partner.

So, for example, when the topic word was "elope", I picked cards depicting a sunset, a mobile phone, a globe of the world, and a card indicating the word "sex" - all of which, I thought, added up to a picture of a romantic moonlight flit - and a picture of a lion, for the obvious pun elope-elope. My partner, however, picked a couple in formal wedding attire, a man kissing

a woman's neck, a red rose, the word "happiness" and a baby. Ridiculous. The kissing couple are obviously perfectly happy. Why should they elope? Even if they did, the wedding would hardly be a bridal gown and dress coat affair. And the suggestion that a baby is already on the way is, I think, quite out of order.

It was just as bad with "bricklayer". My partner picked the White House, a Skyscraper, a dingy-looking Italianate tenement building, a wooden framework of a new house, and a child's drawing of two girls outside their home. I could only think of the last bricklayer we employed, so picked a "Stop" sign (which he did whenever we left the house), a question mark, indicating our bemusement at his slow work-rate, a totally blank card (because he was never there) a mobile phone (which he seemed to be talking on whenever he did turn up) and the card saying "stress".

Score zero again. Still, what can one expect of a partner who does not even have the wit to think of a simple pun.

## Competition winners

Scrabble Silver Jubilee Competition

The prize of Terence Nolder's evening dress - in Scrabble green with sequinned silver letters - has been won by Mrs R Wade of Norwich.

Hieroglyphics

For correctly deciphering our competition, the following win copies of TUT TUT, the Egyptian hieroglyphics games from the British Museum: Hugh Wadding (Newport, Isle of Wight); D O'Connor, (Preston, Lancs); Jane Marsters (New Malden, Surrey).

New Year Competitions:

Next week, we shall begin to catch up with the answers and winners to our end-of-year chess, bridge, backgammon and True-or-False news items competitions which appeared in the 28 December edition.

## Chess William Hartston

The best excitement at this year's Hastings was provided by the Challengers Tournament, which gives an opportunity for players to qualify for the invitation-only Premier tournament the following year. With 10 grandmasters, the field was almost as star-studded as that of the top tournament.

While the press were concentrating on the feats of 12-year-old Luke McShane, who so narrowly missed scoring his second norm towards a master title, the real thrills were in the battle for first place. First, James Plaskett romped into a clear lead, then he was beaten by Joe Gallagher, but in the last two rounds, Igor Rausis of Latvia beat both of them to sprint into first place. He and Plaskett secured qualification for next year's premier.

We gave one brilliant Plaskett win in Thursday's paper. Here's another one, equally spectacular and also ending in mate.

After Black's 1...b6 and White's 2.b3, much of the game becomes a battle to prove which is the stronger bishop: the one of b7 or that on b2. White's 15.g4 is an attempt to open the g-file and bring his rook to help the bishop's efforts in an attack against g7, but the whole plan seemed too optimistic.

When 16.gxf5 was met by 16...d3! the bishop on b2 may have looked more

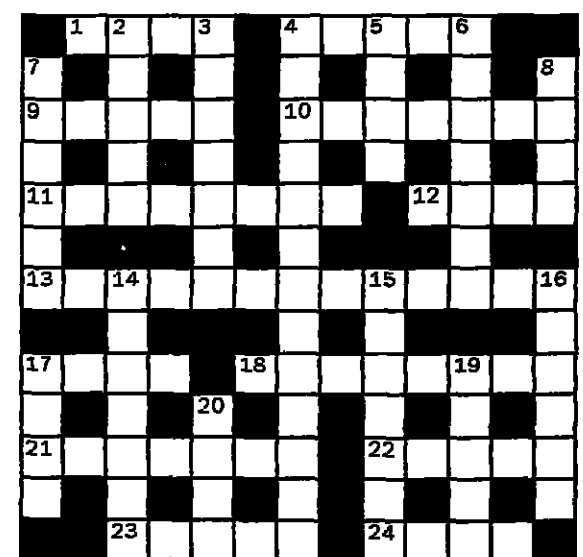
active than his colleague on b7 (particularly when Black had to avoid 17...dxe2? 18.Qxd6!) but the illusion was exposed in forceful style by Plaskett's 20...Rxf4! For the price of a rook, Black reopens his bishop's diagonal and gains two monster pawns on d3 and e3.

After this, White was always facing defeat. He avoided the trap of 29.Bg5 Qxg5 30.Qxg5 Rch2 mate, but fell into a prettier version of the same thing on the following move. After 29...Ke8 Black threatened 30...Qd7, which on the previous move would have been met by Qe2+. White could have forced Black to rethink by playing 30.Bc6+ (when Kd8 loses to Bg5) but instead played the bishop to g5 immediately, letting Black polish the game off with a queen sacrifice.

White: Colin McNab  
Black: James Plaskett  
1 c4 b6 18 Bh5 Rxf5  
2 b3 Bb7 19 Qg4 Rxf8  
3 Bb2 e6 20 Kh1 Rxf4  
4 Nf3 Nf6 21 exd4 Rxd4  
5 e3 d5 22 Qh3 e3  
6 Be2 Bde6 23 Bg1 Bxg2+  
7 0-0 Nbd7 24 Qxg2 e4  
8 d4 0-0 25 Be6+ Kf8  
9 Nbd2 Ne4 26 Bde5 e2  
10 Nxe4 dxe4 27 Rg1 g6  
11 Ne5 f5 28 Bc1 Rh4  
12 Nxd7 Qd7 29 h3 Ke8  
13 f4 Qe7 30 Bg5 Qxg5  
14 Rf2 c5 31 Bc6+ Kf8  
15 g4 cxd4 32 Qg5 Rh3+  
16 gxf5 d3 33 Kg2 Rh2  
17 Rg2 e5 checkmate

## concise crossword

No.3193 Saturday 11 January



- ACROSS**
- Covetousness (4)
  - Runs with long strides (5)
  - Arranges (5)
  - Jury finding (7)
  - Gathering (8)
  - Break (4)
  - Pocket items (13)
  - Domesticated (4)
  - Accessible to only a few (8)
  - Composer (7)
  - Shrub (5)
  - Jargon (5)
  - Unhurried (4)
- DOWN**
- Tacks (5)
  - Muslim veil (7)
  - Road/rail intersection (5,8)
  - Wine (4)
  - Branch of knowledge (7)
  - Disconnect (6)
  - Desist (4)
  - Retribution (7)
  - Bare-headed (7)
  - Obtain (6)
  - Legal wrong (4)
  - Wild West show (5)
  - Passport endorsement (4)

**Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:**  
ACROSS: 1 Ballast, 5 Raids (Balustrades), 8 Actor, 9 Willow, 10 Spender, 11 Pasha, 12 Irvine, 14 Newark, 17 Major, 19 Unusual, 22 Lowdown, 23 Tenor, 24 Rules, 25 Thrusts, DOWN: 1 Brass, 2 Lottery, 3 Acriid, 4 Thwart, 5 Relapse, 6 Idols, 7 Seivark, 12 Tumbler, 13 Nervous, 15 Alumnus, 16 Punnet, 18 Jewel, 20 Uter, 21 Lords

The answers to the Christmas Jumbo Crossword will appear next week

## Bridge Alan Hiron

**Game all; dealer South**  
North  
♠ A J 8 7  
♥ A 7 4 3  
♦ 10 7  
♣ K 4 2  
West  
♠ K  
♥ 10 6 5 2  
♦ Q 6 5  
♣ Q J 9 7 6  
East  
♠ 10 6 4 3  
♥ Q 9  
♦ A K 9 4 3  
♣ 8 5  
South  
♠ Q 9 5 2  
♥ K J 8  
♦ J 8 2  
♠ A 10 3

This was the deal that won the prize for the best played hand in the 1996 Lederer Memorial Trophy. It was an unusual brilliancy, for declarer started off on the wrong foot but found a sparkling recovery.

After two passes, North opened One Club, East overcalled with One Diamond and South (Zia Mahmood) bid one Spade. Both West and North supported their partners' suits and, after making a try for game

## Perplexity

Perplexity returns this week with a new, extra-large set of the popular "26 L of the A" (Letters of the alphabet) alphanumeric puzzles. All you have to do is work out what the letters stand for in the following:

1 A N of H  
2 F in a R G  
3 B of P G T  
4 F on a H (E T T)  
5 O S  
6 G a L

with Three Diamonds, Zia subsided when North could only bid Three Spades.

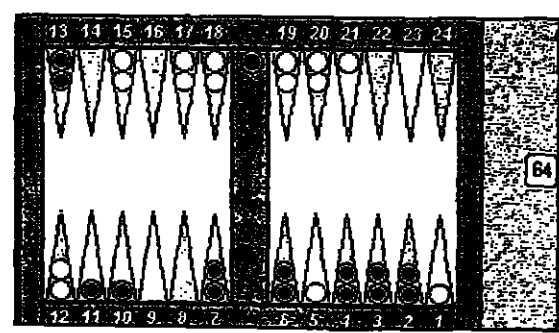
West led ♠ 5 and after winning with his king, East switched to ♠ 6. Declarer won in hand and slipped up when he led ♠ Q to the king and ace. Next he took a successful finesse of ♥ J and led a second trump. When West showed out, Zia muttered the Pakistani equivalent of "Tut, tut," and set out to recover.

He put in the seven from table and, after winning with the ten, East led another club to dummy's king. It looked as though declarer would end up a trick short, but two more rounds of trumps left West in trouble. He had to keep all his hearts and the winning club so had to discard ♠ 6. Zia cashed ♥ K, dropping East's queen, and ran ♥ 8 successfully. Finally declarer got off lead with a club. West won and led ♠ Q and now it was East's problem. If he overtook, South's ♠ J would become a winner; if he left his partner on lead, the ♠ A would be brought back to life.

7 P F P a B in S  
8 R on a C B  
9 T of D L S  
10 T on Y F

When you have deciphered them, send your answers to: Perplexity, the Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, to reach us by 22 January. The first correct answer opened on that date will win a copy of the new Chambers 21st Century Dictionary.

## Backgammon Chris Bray



Last week we introduced the concept of Woolsey's Law of Doubling, (roughly, "If in doubt, double") Now let's look at a practical example. With a man on the bar you are on roll as Black in the above position. Should you double? Should White take or pass?

I was in the box with a partner when this position arose in a six-handed chouette at the Double Fives club (with six or more, it is common for the box to take a partner). We then discussed whether to double. Certainly this position is very volatile. By our next roll we could either have lost our market - reached a position where our opponents would immediately drop a double - or be in trouble ourselves. Consider, for example, the sequence 6,5 for Black followed by 6,5 for White, when it is White who will have lost their market.

In the start position nearly all numbers play well. 4s hit from the bar, 2s, 5s and 6s can be used to hit on the 5-point. 1s and 3s are not so good, but double 1 and double 3 both play well. If we hit one of White's men and they fail to enter we will definitely have lost our market. Now apply Woolsey's Law: If Black doubles should White take? Although we thought our opponents would take, White is going to lose a lot of gammons and that may just push the decision towards a drop. This meets Woolsey's key criterion: we're not totally sure it is a take - so we must double! Double we did and White accepted the cube. We were rewarded for our aggression by rolling 4,4. This was played Bag/21\*. 13/9/5/1\* putting three men on the bar. White stayed on the bar and we easily won a gammon. Later analysis using Jellyfish showed that with White owning the cube, Black wins only 51 per cent of the time but 70 per cent of those wins are gammons. This confirms the correct action in the initial position to be double/take.

THE INDEPENDENT LONG WEEKEND

TO FIND OUT WH

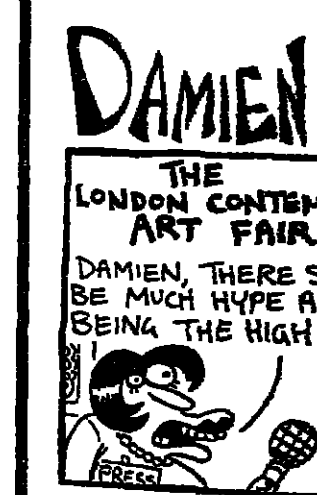
Whatever happened to...

Acid rain?



Serena Mackesy In my week

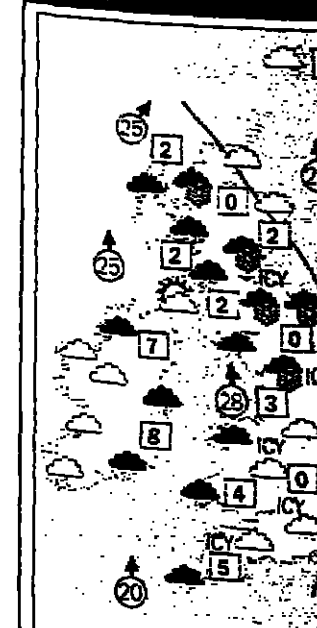
Whizzing past the window at regular intervals are the legs of an impossibly slim woman dangling from a trapeze



DAMIAN THE LONDON CONTENT ART FAIR

DAMIAN, THERE'S BE MUCH HYPE A BEING THE HIGH

Weather



Location	Time	Weather
Aberdeen	2:36	Cloud
Anglesey	2:36	Cloud
Belfast	2:36	Cloud
Birmingham	2:36	Cloud
Blackpool	2:36	Cloud
Bournemouth	2:36	Cloud
Brighton	2:36	Cloud
Bristol	2:36	Cloud
Cardiff	2:36	Cloud
Canterbury	2:36	Cloud
Cheltenham	2:36	Cloud
Colchester	2:36	Cloud
Exeter	2:36	Cloud
Glasgow	2:36	Cloud
Leeds	2:36	Cloud
Liverpool	2:36	Cloud
Manchester	2:36	Cloud
Newcastle	2:36	Cloud
Nottingham	2:36	Cloud
Sheffield	2:36	Cloud
Southampton	2:36	Cloud
Stoke-on-Trent	2:36	Cloud
Sunderland	2:36	Cloud
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Wrexham	2:36	Cloud
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# Dancing in the dark



**John Walsh meets ...Michael Flatley**



**'S**o tell me," I asked the world's fastest, richest and most egomaniacal dancer, "Can you waltz?"

"What?" said Michael Flatley.

"Or tango? Or rumba? Or salsa?"

It is rather a cheek to enquire if the most famous son of Terpsichore since Rudolf Nureyev can do things ordinary mortals do, especially those that involve handleaders, three-four rhythm, taffeta and sequins. But, his reply was revealing. "I don't know if I can," he said. "Of course I can go out on the floor and have fun with the girls. But I don't imagine I'd be very good at most of those dances. I wouldn't say I'm very proficient. I rarely get up to dance anywhere but on stage. I'm sort of comfortable in my own little world."

Indeed he is. But then Mr Flatley's "little world" currently embraces Australia, the States, London and Dublin and nets him about \$1m a month. The stage world he inhabits is a show called *Lord of the Dance*, the one he went off and devised after his acrimonious split from Riverdance in October 1995. It's a music-and-dance extravaganza loosely based around Celtic mythology with some curious add-on effects deriving from Druidism, Greek-god attitudinising, biker chic and fascist iconography. It's with this vulgar but dynamic entertainment that Flatley has set about conquering the world. For a man who was unknown – and whose chosen art form had no popular audience – in 1994, he has, you could say, risen to the occasion.

Everyone knows the story of Riverdance – how a seven-minute burst of Irish step dancing in the 1994 Eurovision Song Contest, devised by an RTE producer called Moya Doherty and choreographed by Flatley, won instant and total acclaim among an audience of 300 million worldwide, gave Irish dancing an unprecedented global cachet, became the bestselling video of all time (selling two million copies) and made over £30m in two years. Everyone also knows how spectacularly the producer and her star fell out on the eve of Riverdance's return to London. *Lord of the Dance* is Flatley's revenge.

He and his 100-strong entourage are performing at Wembley this week, having just returned from touring Australia. How'd it go? "Oh, unbelievable," said Flatley. "They were dancin' around and jumpin' around, screamin' and howlin'. We couldn't have anticipated anything like it – I never toured in Australia before. We did a quarter of a million tickets in 10 days. We were sold out more than two months before we arrived. They added two more shows in Newcastle, and they were both sold out in two hours. And

they're both 8,000-seaters."

Flatley always has statistics to hand. A terrible man for the attendance figures, though it's a necessary part of his persona as dancing impresario, as arty businessman. And you gradually realise he has a whole wardrobe of personas which he adopts as the whim takes him. At different times in our conversation he tried on the slushy Arch-romantic, the Californian Mystic, the Sex God, the Dead-End Kid, the Blarney purveyor, the Bit of a Lad.

Here's the Arch-romantic: "Beaches, I love beaches. Every spare minute I have I go walking on an empty beach somewhere because I just love to think and dream and create. And the feel of the ocean and the fresh air – there's a great energy there. I feel very moved on a beach..." Skegness, it's so bracing.

Flatley especially liked the mile-wide beaches of the Oz coastline, where he worked on his winter tan. He's a startlingly handsome chap with a peach-skin fuzziness about the face (fluffy sideburns, designer stubble) and waves of streaked hair teased upwards in an aspirant rockabilly quiff. Flatley's black suit is dramatically sculpted to his compact 5ft 9in frame, his tie a tasteful red, his shirt a long-cuffed cotton, his cufflinks expensive little silver artworks – yet you pick up a feeling of unease about him, a rootlessness in his hurt blue eyes, a sense that he's a constructed thing rather than a real person.

It may be something to do with his detachment about his body: "I have to constantly separate myself and look at myself as a product. I can't just buy another violin if it breaks, you know? It doesn't work that way. I treat my legs very carefully." To this end he employs a lady called Derry Ann Morgan who specialises in "special rub-downs" before and after every show. "If I don't have the one after the show, my legs will be so sore getting out of bed in the morning, it'll take me a while even to stand up on them." Ms Morgan's manual therapies also include something called *raki* – "puttin' her hands over certain parts of me. She just puts good energy in and sucks any bad energy out." So it's a kind of mystical healing... "No, it's very commonplace. She's a gifted woman."

His new passion is the sensory-deprivation tank, the kind that was all the rage in California 15 years ago. Mr Flatley is ecstatic about its benefits. "It's fabulous. Complete darkness and not a sound. One time I went to sleep in there and my body was jumpin' the whole time [he mimes a convulsive twitch], but that was just all the bad energy and electricity being taken out of it... At the end of an hour is when I really start to go inside. It's when I get magnificent ideas. It's about focusing. Focus, focus, focus." These ideas you get (I said):

surely the essence of the tank is stillness, and the essence of what you do is movement. How can you pursue an idea of movement while you're lying, sense-deprived, like a floating corpse? Flatley looked hugely pleased, as if someone had mentioned a secret only he knew about. "Control," he said, "complete control, absolute control. Imagine the beauty of not being able to move, and forcing your mind to do it for you. You can't get

words, the man and his feet have become separate entities, a form of dualism Descartes would find intriguing. Was he conscious of his brain telling his feet what to do?

He leant forward. "That is exactly what I'm trying to tell the audience – that my mind is controlling my feet at all times. I'm telling them that I'm thinking while I'm there. I'm focusing while I'm there. I'm not just on cruise control. This is the real thing. And they

**I get magnificent ideas in the sensory deprivation tank. It's all about focusing. Focus, focus, focus**

up and try it, you have to continue thinking. It's brilliant. I dance like a king after it."

The *Lord of the Dance* show features, among several displays of superhuman agility, a weird amount of militiaman strutting, of black-shirted uniforms, dictatorial paraphernalia, masks and what might be jackboots. What was it doing in a Celtic dream-world? Flatley frowned. "You have to realise the show is fiction. It's not any particular myth or legend. It's just the best way I could interpret good versus evil. Our dancing is very precise but I don't think it's military in any way. Just very masculine..."

There's at least one moment of real magic. As Flatley does one of his complex Irish-flamenco-tap routines, he glances over his shoulder and, grinning down at the ground-level blur of movement, he wags his fingers at his heels. Suddenly you see him, not as a dancer, but as a man dangerously set upon by a pack of snapping terriers. In other

words, the man and his feet have become separate entities, a form of dualism Descartes would find intriguing. Was he conscious of his brain telling his feet what to do?

As we sit in the Lanesborough Hotel, discussing Mr Flatley's wonderfulness, his uniqueness, his focus and control, his energy and artistry, a saying from his father's native Sligo occurs to me: "If conceit was consumption, ye'd be dead long ago." He upsets lots of people. The *Daily Telegraph* called *Lord of the Dance* "a display of conceit so shameless as to be risible". Other commentators go on about the "O'Chippendales" side of his work, his "smash and grab" approach to Irish culture. They have a point. The trouble is, Flatley is unique. He has spent the bulk of his life doing something nobody else can do.

His father Michael was a building contractor who emigrated to Chicago in 1947 with his Carlown-born wife, Ellish. Michael junior was 11 when, on an Irish holiday, his mother took him to a stepdancing class back in Co. Carlow. His grandmother had been Leinster dance champion; it was in

the genes; it became his life. Back in Chicago, he practised. He remembers creating dance patterns in the dark: "I used to go into the rooms in the basement, turn off all the lights so my ear would be absolute, so I wouldn't be influenced by what I saw. I still do. That's where I get these rhythm patterns you won't hear anywhere else in the world." He became the first American holder of the World Irish Dancing Championships in 1975 when he was 17. It occurred to me that, among the jocks, duds and greasballs of the average Chicago school, a dancer with an Irish accent must have stuck out like a dolmen. "No, I fitted in with everybody. I was a dancer but I didn't go around talking about it. I was a boxer but I didn't talk about that. I played ice hockey, I played football with the lads. We did what everyone did."

Why did he take up boxing? "We lived in a rough neighbourhood. It was on the south side of the city, 79th and Ashland Avenue, the Little Flower parish" – after the Catholic icon, St Thérèse of Lisieux: Flatley smiles at the inaptness of the name – "and I hadda walk a mile to school. I'd cross paths with people comin' from the other side of the avenue, and I'd have fist fights nearly every day. I was a skinny little fellow. One day I came home and my father said, 'That's enough bloody noses.' He took my brother and me to the gym – at the time we were probably the only white fella there – and we learned to handle ourselves. And they started to realise they could pick on other people, but let the two Irish guys go because it's gonna be just too difficult..."

Flatley had a period of labouring jobs ("Whenever I think I'm getting big-headed, I remember where it all came from – the days when they passed me the freezing cold shovel. I get back to it all the time") before becoming a

dancer full-time. Those unfamiliar with Celtic dance should know that, in its pure state, it's a formal and inexpressive business: hands straight down by the sides, head stiff, no body movements above the waist – the total effect is of someone in a strait-jacket hopping over burning coals. Then Flatley danced with The Chieftains. Paddy Moloney's purist folk group, and began to change the rules. "As I did more and more venues, I started to use my arms, to use my body and be more expressive. I couldn't use my arms like a tap dancer, flappin' them around, or like a ballet dancer, that would be too soft, nor like a flamenco dancer, although what I'm doin' is closest to flamenco, because they're Celts as well. I had to find a completely new way of doin' it, less formal but strong and powerful and confident. And the further out I went, the more the crowd came with me. The more things I put in [he snaps his fingers, like a Fifties beatnik] the more they'd be screamin' and yellin'..."

So the only professional

Irish dancer in the world, the rule-breaker with the 28-taps-a-second feet, went on the road. Wasn't it, I asked, a little like speaking a language nobody else knows? Flatley mused. "I've had such a strange life. I've never had to audition for anything. People have always called me and asked me to do things. I've been everywhere, the Hollywood Bowl, the Kennedy Centre in DC, Carnegie Hall. I've danced in front of presidents, the National Endowment for the Arts" – and, modesty might forbid him adding, he was pronounced a "Living Treasure" by the National Geographic Society...

Along the way his stage presentation underwent another change. "It just happened one night, completely by coincidence. You know how it is, you're on tour, leading a bachelor existence. One night my clothes were a disaster, my shirt was wrinkled and under the bed somewhere. So I went on stage without a shirt, just a jacket. The audience went nuts. And I thought: why didn't I think of this before?"

Now he's off to wow Amer-

ica, from New York ("Every solo I've ever devised for myself since I was a child was built for Radio City Music Hall") to his native Chicago and the former residents of Little Flower parish. Why was he doing it? "My whole life has been to get this far and to do this. I've made enough money now, more than I can spend. What's important is that I'm putting myself into my art. People pay a lot of money to come and see me. I didn't come here to be second best."

Michael, you point out, you're pushing 39. Shouldn't you be settling into something more slow and easygoing? "The Cartesian hooper, with his violent leanings, his fondness for the dark and his casual assumption of artistic genius, regarded me steadily. 'I'm not the type of performer who gets to a scale like this and then fades into the sunset. I don't think any great artist thinks. I'll just sing at half-power tonight, nobody'll notice.' It's going to be like this and then – click! – one day it'll be over. It can't be any other way. I can't dance at 50 per cent. I have only one speed..."

## Picasso by Eurostar.

You've got less than 10 days to see the largest Picasso Portrait Exhibition ever. It's running at the Galerie Nationale du Grand Palais in Paris, and the easiest way to get there is by Eurostar. Fares start from as little as £79 return.

The exhibition runs until 20 Jan. The Galerie is open until: 10pm on Weds, 8pm Mon, Thurs, Fri, Sat & Sun but closed on Tues. Reservations are not required for afternoon visits.

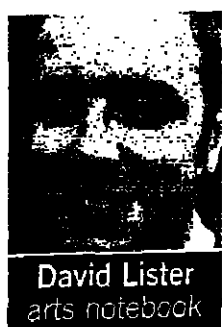
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Can the popular song embrace more of life's experiences than falling in and out of love and the purchase of blue suede shoes and other accessories? When I discussed this once with Roger Daltrey of The Who he said he had hoped for a long time that rock and pop would deal with middle-aged angst just as it dealt with teenage angst. Indeed, he had thought that his old sparring partner Pete Townshend might be the very man to compose such lyrics, but it hadn't happened. Another part of life seldom put to music is the joy or otherwise of bringing up children.

An exception is the British jazz singer Gina Harkell. As well as being a singer and composer, she is one of the leading lights in a new committee to lobby for, amongst other things, more jazz on mainstream music radio – any jazz on



David Lister  
arts notebook

mainstream music radio would be a good start. Gina is a strange animal in jazz circles as she sings not about the usual jazz themes of dives, drugs, dead horn players, lost love or, if the tempo is upbeat, found love. Instead, many of her numbers are about motherhood, rare enough in pop and middle-of-the-road, and a radical departure for piano, tenor sax and bass.

One of the numbers she sang at a New Year gig I attended was called "Granny O'Granny Please Comb My Hair". With words by the

poet Grace Nichols it dealt with a little girl's delight in having her grandmother tend to her coiffure. It's a brave move to domesticate the jazz idiom, and it leads to the larger question of why children feature so little in music generally. They are welcomed as babies (David Bowie's "Kooks" for his son, Steve Wonder's "Isn't She Lovely" for his daughter etc) but once past the nappy stage, are never sung of again. Why?

I appeared this week on a radio programme (I know, one can't appear on radio, but what is the correct word?) about the arts and the national lottery. BBC Radio 4's *Agenda* programme had Richard Eyre of the National Theatre and Stephen Daldry of the Royal Court continuing to warn of the potential iniquity of lottery money being used to fund a revenue spending in the arts rather than just

for buildings as was the original intention. And I felt rather like the chap in the Bateman cartoon in advocating that this should happen in some regulated way. In fact, of course, it is happening already. The new Arts Council initiative, Arts For Everyone will give lottery money for the commissioning of new writing for the theatre and there is every likelihood that some of this new writing will end up on the stage of the Royal Court and quite possibly the National.

It should not be beyond the wit of government, the Arts Council and leading arts practitioners to earmark other areas where lottery money can be used in what have traditionally been revenue funded parts of the arts. As for breaking the apparently sacred principle of additionality (by which lottery money should not be a substitute for annual Treasury grant), it should

also not be beyond the wit of those responsible to draw up legislation saying that lottery money should never fund more than a certain percentage of arts spending.

David Bowie's 50th birthday was marked by the BBC by an interview with the singer. It was plugged up being particularly "candid". In fact it contained virtually nothing new, and much of it was taken up with clips of interviews gone by. There was one moment though when Bowie was about to be candid. He mentioned, unprompted and most unusually for him in a live interview, the troubles in his own family. He has never spoken on TV before about his late brother's schizophrenia, but the interviewer, the illustrious and exalted Alan Yentob no less, did not pursue it at all. There are times when one wants to strangle the television.

IDENT LONG WEEKEND

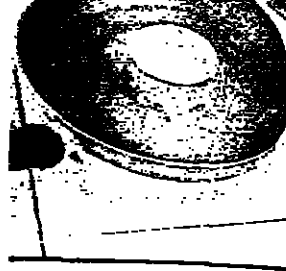
lorer's pastimes.

is at the Chelsea Arts Club another one: "There was a girl from Ceylon who d herself up in the when they knocked down the she was flat on the floor, and found she'd not been hurt gone."

ward Lear's not terribly he doesn't bother much first and last lines. It's better some internal rhyming. it's a minor art form. This my favourite: "There was a g man from Bengal who was tancy dress hall he thought d risk it and go as a it but a dog ate him up in the Not one of mine, but I've ys liked it. I can see it all iening, can't you? I'm afraid become a bit of a linerick. You know, rattle them off don't let the other man get merick in."

use of failed inspiration "The turn Book of Limbocks" eding O'Parrot is available from good bookshop for £8.99

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stylish and elegant, music as a social thing.

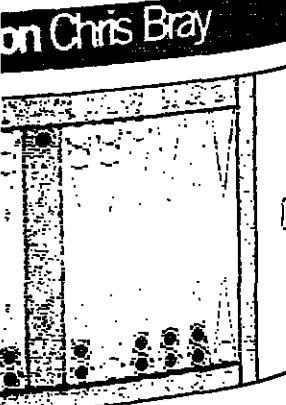
The budget album is based on a selection of current charts

Bawn O'Beirne-Ranelagh



by William Hartston

on Chris Bray



of artistic angst



# arts & books

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Winterson's tragedy and Kennedy's triumph .....7

## Nureyev the last 10 years

A new BBC documentary seeks to suggest that Rudolf Nureyev's last decade was lived and danced beneath the shadow of impending death. John Percival, the star's friend and biographer, begs to disagree



**D**e mortuis – well, it used to be nothing but good that should be spoken of the dead, but now the idea seems to be that dishing the dirt is what matters. This is not just a question of the way newspapers obituaries have become more frank and honest over recent years – that is cause for gratitude – but elsewhere the trend has gone too far. And I am not the only person who will be hopping mad about the *Omnibus* programme marking the fourth anniversary of Rudolf Nureyev's death, to be shown by BBC1 on Tuesday.

What an opportunity lost! Granted, this programme does not parade supposed facts which are simply untrue: in that respect, it is unlike two biographies of Nureyev (one English, one American) that were rushed out once he could no longer sue. But the documentary, covering the last 10 years of his life, is both incomplete and heavily slanted, its bias indicated by the title: "Dancing through Darkness". At least two of Nureyev's closest friends, the American Wallace Potts and the French Druce François, withdrew their co-operation from the programme-makers during filming because, Potts told me, "their approach was misleading – they had said it was about his professional life, but it became clear that they wanted to concentrate on his illness." Other witnesses who did take part, such as Nureyev's colleague Patricia Ruanne, can be seen on camera gritting their teeth against questions they find inappropriate. And some dancers are shown only in brief snippets although they actually recorded far more; did their comments not fit the chosen line?

People with much less knowledge of Nureyev, however, are allowed to pontificate about his thoughts and motives. Among these I am inclined to place the American agent, Andrew Grossman,

who took over from Nureyev's long-term adviser, Sandor Gortinsky. Grossman reveals a somewhat shaky grasp of what Nureyev actually achieved during his time in Paris, and his surprise at his client's reluctance to sign a contract for *The King and I* is revealing. Maybe he did not realise that what Nureyev really wanted at that point was a renewal of his Paris contract on acceptable terms.

"He made a million dollars" from *The King and I*, Grossman claims. Nureyev liked to make money, but after 1975 it all went to the Foundation he had set up. Some was invested in the paintings and antique furniture that filled his various homes, but when his dearest friend Maude Gosling expressed worries about his extravagance, he begged her "Don't stop me, because I love to have them around me. When I'm gone, they can all be sold." The proceeds, after providing for his relatives, were to benefit dance, and especially young dancers; and indeed several scholarships have already been awarded.

The starting (and finishing) point of the BBC programme is Nureyev's last big production: an opulent version of the classic *La Bayadère*, premiered at the Paris Opéra on 8 October 1992. Nureyev had not long recovered from painful kidney stones, then struggled against a heavy respiratory infection to stage the three-act work in just three weeks. The film shows him taking a rehearsal from a couch but his eyes not missing a point, conveying his corrections by gestures and through an assistant.

No wonder that, by opening night, he was worn out and had to watch the performance from a couch in a stage-box. Cameras focus on his gaunt face as he is helped on stage to acknowledge an ovation. This is a sad sight, and the implication we are left with is that afterwards he just curled up in a corner and waited to die.

Actually, no, he didn't. At the dinner after the premiere, he talked to Maude Gosling about his plans for choreographing Hans Werner Henze's *Onclime*. When I visited him two days later in his apartment on the Quai Voltaire, he was delighted that he had persuaded his doctor, Michel Canesi, to certify him fit to fly the next day to the Caribbean island of Saint-Barthélemy, where he had a house. "I'll never shake this off in all the cold and damp here in Paris," he told me, "but in the sun I'll soon be better." That evening he went off to the Opéra-Comique to watch Roland Petit's *Marseilles Ballet* and afterwards to discuss plans for conducting some performances of Petit's *Coppélia*. And when his dancer friends Charles Jude and Florence Clerc accompanied him to Saint-Barth's, Nureyev started working out movements on Jude for a future production of Britten's *The Prince of the Pagodas*.

All his life Nureyev had been used to overcoming illness and injury. Rather than lose his role in a new ballet by Frederick Ashton, he struggled into Covent Garden with a temperature of 102 for the premiere of *Jazz Calendar*. (Royal Ballet dancers punningly nicknamed him Randolph Neveroff.) When an injury during Act 1 of *La Sylphide* once forced him to allow a replacement to go on in Act 2, he still got on stage somehow for the evening's last ballet, *The Lesson*, where he could adjust the steps to save the hurt leg, and his acting could cover any shortcomings in technique. And after one performance, I remember watching him remove yards of elastic bandage worn for support like a puttee round one ankle under his tights.

So when Dr Canesi diagnosed him as HIV-positive in 1984, this did not make him change his professional way of life. The film's implication that he began rushing to cram everything in is a misread-

ing: he had always rushed, all his life wanted to do more than there was time for, simply because he had so many ambitions and interests. Besides, as Canesi says, at that time the expectation was that Aids would kill only one in 10; the grimmer, longer-term truth became apparent only gradually. And Nureyev acted as if he would beat this illness like the others.

The 10 years covered by the programme were a period of astonishing achievement. Nureyev's transformation of the Paris Opéra Ballet is described by the ballet master Patrice Bart, but it could surely have been made clearer to a non-specialist audience just how he changed the dancers' approach, allowed young talent its head, and widened their range with a whole new repertoire. From historical re-creations to new commissions, from classic revivals to the most extreme modernists, from his own productions to a steady stream of visiting choreographers, they tackled everything and did it well.

I cannot think of anyone else who has achieved so much on taking over an established company. What Nureyev did at the Paris Opéra would have been a full-time job for anyone else, but (while keeping in touch via daily phone calls whenever he was absent) he combined it with guest appearances and productions, world tours, and launching a further career as a conductor.

That was not just a whim but a way of continuing to perform when he could no longer dance, and also of enriching his love of music. Herbert von Karajan had advised him to do it and even said "I'll teach you". Nureyev studied conducting seriously in Vienna and California, directed concerts, and conducted an American Ballet Theatre gala of the Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet*. A fascinating development for a dancer – but one that is not shown at all in this programme, and gets only a throwaway

mention: "He conducted and choreographed and continued to dance."

How good it would have been to see some of this, as well as more detail about what happened in Paris, instead of the interminably repeated pictures of dancers walking through corridors, interspersed with the most hackneyed and irrelevant background shots of motor traffic and trains, people smoking or sitting in cafés, even that wonderful old cliché, the Eiffel Tower. Add lots of slow motion and soft focus, with a melancholy soundtrack specially composed by Alexander Balanescu, and you have what often looks more like a travel commercial than an arts documentary.

The programme's makers might have probed further into why, after such a triumph as ballet director, Nureyev's contract was not renewed. Jack Lang, the former Arts Minister who originally appointed him to the job, claims not to know why Nureyev was edged out, but mutters darkly about "personal problems" and his health. Nobody breathes the name Pierre Bergé (head of Yves Saint-Laurent) who had been put in charge of both the Paris opera houses and whose main achievement there was to have sacked not only Nureyev but the musical director Daniel Barenboim in favour of replacements neither of whom lasted long.

Still, Nureyev (as so often in life) actually has the last laugh in this programme. Forget the baleful comments; ignore the lugubrious background music. Just look at Nureyev's face. In almost every shot, he is either smiling or laughing outright. And this is the man under imminent threat, the man "dancing through darkness"? Or is it the man I remember, who loved life and enjoyed it to the full? Decide for yourself.

*Omnibus* 10.45pm Tuesday, BBC1

## To bop or not to bop

It may not be in an idiom Ronnie Scott would recognise, but the future of British jazz has never sounded better. By Phil Johnson

**S**tanding at the bar, smoking a cigarette, staring into space... Whether the venue was a hotel in Havana during the jazz festival he and his partner Pete King helped to organise there; in clubs, pubs and concert halls throughout Britain on tours with his quintet, or, most famously, at his own club in Soho, the late Ronnie Scott did a lot of staring into space. Caught in repose, his hawk-like profile wreathed in clouds of smoke, the contemplative moment provided by a fog break seemed to extend on a chain of tobacco, into infinity.

It's tempting, however fanciful, to imagine that the space Scott was staring into was also something to do with the future of jazz, and his own place in it. A terrific tenor saxophonist in his prime, whose Jazz Couriers group with Tubby Hayes (who died in 1973) was the highlight of British bop in the late Fifties, Scott nevertheless suffered from insecurity about the value of his playing, often refusing offers to sit in with the American stars he had booked to play at his club, who admired him unreservedly. Even the tetchy Charles Mingus gave praise: "Of all the white boys, Ronnie Scott gets closer to the negro

blues feeling," he said in 1961. This, of course, was part of the problem. Jazz musicians of Scott's generation dedicated themselves to an idiom whose cultural roots lay largely in another continent and another racial identity, and they tended to measure their own art accordingly, becoming hypersensitive about their imagined shortcomings.

Although there has been a vital European jazz tradition since the 1920s and Django Reinhardt, it's only comparatively recently that it has seemed to offer British musicians a credible alternative to aspire to. At present, European jazz has never been stronger, with British artists the strongest of all if we accept the measurement offered by the annual Danish Jazzpar Prize (a cash reward of \$34,000, and an overall budget of \$250,000 for performances, broadcasts and recordings). This year's winner is Django Bates from Beckenham, the pianist, composer and bandleader (of Loose Tubes and Delightful Precipice). Three years ago, the winner was Canterbury's Tony Coe, the saxophonist and clarinetist, and these two represent the only non-Americans to have won the award – the nearest jazz gets to a Nobel – since it was established

eight years ago. Significantly, both Bates and Coe abjure the bop tradition in favour of an eclecticism that draws from earlier and later forms of jazz, as well as from classical and folk music. For young British jazz musicians today, the range of influences has never been broader, though what for Scott would have been the great tradition – the lineage of bop from Charlie Parker to the Marsalis brothers – can be a burden as much as an inspiration.

For the saxophonist Julian Argüelles – whose *Scapes* album of last year was one of the most striking, and strikingly different, of all British jazz albums – the bop tradition is a perplexing inheritance. "I don't know how I deal with it," he says. "I go through phases. Sometimes I feel really happy playing saxophone and then sometimes I find it quite frustrating or even depressing, especially because there is a real tradition with the sax, a tradition I came up through, of John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins. It really is hard to not sound like that; it's in the nature of the instrument to sound very, well, jazzy. I listen to Coltrane and Rollins and just think that that's what the instrument does best."

Argüelles finds alternative models in

classical and folk music, but recognises the importance of a European jazz tradition too, citing the examples of the Norwegian Jan ("Officium") Garbrek, the British John Surman and the Brazilians Hermeto Pascoal and Egberto Gismonti.

At 23, the pianist Nikki Yeoh is perhaps the most exciting British jazz musician of her generation. Yet to make a record, she came to prominence after sitting in on a jam session at the Jazz Café as an amateur, where she impressed Courtney Pine sufficiently for him to pick her for his band there and then. She has since toured with Neneh Cherry, formed her own trio, *Infinium*, begun a series of solo performances and written for the contemporary classical keyboard sextet *Piano Circus*, who programmed her piece alongside works by John Cage. "I don't see myself as fitting in with either the European or American traditions," she says. "There isn't so much pressure these days to fit in with any category. People are starting to get their influences from all sorts of different places."

Yeoh does, however, recognise national differences in the way jazz is passed on from one generation to the next. "In the US, there's a tradition of bandleaders as teachers. With someone

like Dizzy Gillespie, or Wynton Marsalis now, they wouldn't just get you out of bed and say, 'Right, G flat minor, ninth chord!' They'd explain how it works, and pass their knowledge on to members of the band. That sort of thing isn't woven into the fabric of the cloth here."

Yeoh is currently working on a commission for this year's Bath Festival which involves harmonising the sound of the spoken word from readings in different languages of one of her own poems, for a composition for 14 musicians and a video projection.

Video projections? Compositions for six pianos? John Cage? You can almost see Ronnie Scott shaking his head with disdain and reaching for the packet of fags. He would, however, surely love Yeoh's improvisation on Coltrane's "Giant Steps", and thrill to Argüelles' tender reading of "Too Young to Go Steady", the corny standard Coltrane transfigured into rare art. Staring into such a space, perhaps the future of British jazz wouldn't look too grim, even to Ronnie?

Julian Argüelles Quartet 8pm today, Julian / Steve Argüelles Duo 3pm tomorrow, at Blackheath Concert Halls, 25 Lee Rd, London SE3 (0181-463 0100)

THE INDEPENDENT LOW  
TO FIND OUT WH

Whatever happened to...

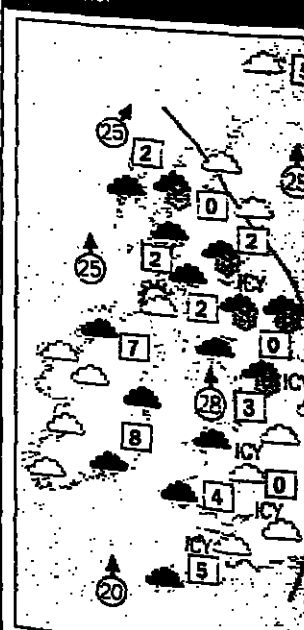
Acid rain?



Whizzing past the window at regular intervals are the legs of an impossibly slim woman dangling from a trapeze



Weather



City	Time	Lighting
Aberdeen	4:15pm to 8:02am	
London	4:15pm to 8:02am	
Birmingham	4:25pm to 8:11am	
Manchester	4:18pm to 8:13am	
Newcastle	4:14pm to 8:20am	
Glasgow	4:03pm to 8:25am	
Belfast	4:09pm to 8:41am	
Cardiff	4:23pm to 8:40am	
Edinburgh	4:23pm to 8:40am	
Glasgow	4:23pm to 8:40am	
London	4:23pm to 8:40am	
Manchester	4:23pm to 8:40am	
Newcastle	4:23pm to 8:40am	
Glasgow	4:23pm to 8:40am	
Belfast	4:23pm to 8:40am	

سكان الامل



# Have you heard the latest 'Knock! Knock!' joke?



Tinselly sounds and festive fun with the Bournemouth SO. By Ian Pillow

Christmas came to the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra suddenly, without warning, as it always does. We'd long forgotten about those dreadful motorised nodding gnomes in the shopping precinct opposite the Poole Arts Centre – they seemed to have been there since September. There we were, having groaned our way through yet another Brahms symphony with Herbert Von Mogadon in the morning, and were taking our places after lunch expecting much of the same, when suddenly we heard a familiar voice (we hadn't bothered to look up at the conductor's rostrum). "Good afternoon, everyone." "Good afternoon, Ron," came back the feeble response from a band faced by Mogadon's endless soliloquies about the meaning of an F sharp. In true panto fashion, the conductor tried again. "Good afternoon, everyone." We suddenly found our party hats. "Good afternoon, Ron!" – this time fortissimo. Ron Goodwin was here. At a stroke, it was Christmas.

As further evidence of this there was a memo on my chair from the management. Was I going to present my pre-concert talk, "The use of sonata-rondo form in *Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer* and its implications on modern society", as advertised? This was from a new member of staff who had failed to appreciate her predecessor's sense of humour.

There is something reassuring about the Ron Goodwin Christmas Show. The music is the same year in year out, but coming face to face

with *Little Donkey* after 11 months on the battlefield in hand-to-hand mortal combat with the great classics is as comforting as one's fireside arm chair. Anyway, the jokes are different from last year (they come from the year before) and there is always a novelty item.

This year it was a spectacular arrangement of *O Little Town of Bethlehem*. As the whole programme is decorated with tinselly, tinkly festive sounds, we have one of those fiendishly clever electronic keyboard things which at the press of a button reproduces – with uncanny accuracy – a vague, approximate impression of a harpsichord, a piano, or an ice-cream van (I'm told it's meant to be a celeste). It can also transpose into any key. If you can't be bothered with all those black notes, just stick to the white ones and the micro chip will do the rest. That is, if it's in a good mood – it has a habit of throwing an artistic wobble for no apparent reason. Ever since the poor keyboard player once unwittingly detonated "Cosmic Explosion" during *Silent Night*, we've always waited with bated breath.

For *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, it was supposed to be a harpsichord (for the old world touch), twanging away on top of a triangle (for the festive touch), a harp (for the angelic touch) and earth-shattering kit drums and thumping, pounding electric guitars (for the devotional touch). Having thus set the scene, the rest of the orchestra launched forth with the tune, all in a merry F major. Except for the harpsichord. Even though the wretched

player was hammering away in state-of-the-art F major, the synthesiser had decided unilaterally to transpose up a semi-tone into F sharp – and there was nothing anyone could do about it. *O Little Town of Bethlehem* thus emerged in what sounded like a newly discovered arrangement by Stockhausen.

If our favourite Christmas event is the Ron Goodwin Show, coming a close second is the "Seasonal Concert with Carols" that we do in Quires and Places where they don't want the Ron Goodwin Show. Its success hinges on the Guest Presenter. This character is usually found by our management sticking a pin in the *Radio Times* and coming up with some nerd off *Blue Peter* or Saturday kids' TV. The best ones are those who have to narrate *Peter and the Wolf* or some such thing, can't read a note of music and don't know a double-bass from a dustbin lid.

This was a vintage year. To add to the fun, not only could the presenter not read a note of music, but the conductor was from East Europe and didn't understand a word of what the presenter was saying anyway.

Even though Santa was kind to me this year, the first rehearsal of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (special commission) remains the highlight of my Christmas. The presenter looked nervous. "Don't worry," said the conductor. "Just say, ven I do zis," pointing a finger.

"Once upon a time..." (our presenter was Irish) "Goldilocks was walking through a wood on a foim sommer's day..." Skippy, whistly

music on flute; the conductor pointed... "when she came to a little cott..."

"Stop! No! Zat was fur ze first wioleence. Start again."

"Once upon a toim Goldilocks was walkin' through a wood on a foim sommer's day..." Skippy, whistly music on flute, then a sexy, skinky tune on the first violins... "when she came to a little cottage. Oi wonder if anyone's in?" In an inspirational burst of improvised method-acting that would have been the talk of any drama academy, the presenter here beat his fist upon the air, pretending to knock upon the door. This was followed by the sound of the vibraphone imitating a doorbell.

"Is there nobody in? Oi'll try agin." (Didn't I tell you? The script is up for the TS Eliot Prize.) Failing to appreciate the composer's inspirational masterstroke with the vibraphone, the presenter pounded the air with his fist again.

"No!" interrupted our frustrated conductor. "You press ze finker in ze eer – two – and ve make ze dink-dunk." Satisfied that he had thus clarified the situation, he then said, "Ve do agin."

"Is there nobody in? Oi'll try agin," and with touching obsequious obedience the presenter put a finger in each ear, as instructed, presumably expecting the vibraphone to activate some special detonating device. Just as well he misunderstood really. Had he really put two fingers in the air in what was supposed to be a "family show" it would have been a black day for orchestra-audience relations.

## An element of surprise

Chopin Recitals. By Adrian Jack

Louis Lortie devoted part two of his Chopin recital at the Wigmore Hall last Friday to the 24 Preludes – not so frequently played as you would expect for such popular pieces. Lortie is certainly a strong pianist, and played the rippling left hand of No 3 with a boldness hardly warranted by the piano, *leggero* marking. But the outer sections of the "Raindrop" Prelude were delicate and really quiet, and stilled the audience like a spell. Despite performances that were never less than technically commanding and expressively purposeful, however, the response to most of the programme seemed underwhelming. Some spark was missing, as if Lortie knew too well how he would shape the music.

Ten years after he first made such a strong impression in this country, Lortie has not failed to live up to it, but he hasn't really surprised us either. With more than 20 discs to his credit, including the complete piano works of Ravel and sonatas of Beethoven, he's been cast in the role of can-do-all, another cycle-slogger. That may be commercially rewarding, but it doesn't necessarily make for the most interesting artistic results.

The qualities of Andrew Wilde – not to be confused with his British senior David Wilde, still less with the veteran American Earl Wilde – have been compared to those of Myra Hess and Solomon. His OEH recital on Wednesday made apparent why. He chose a Chopin programme of almost overwhelming richness – the *Fantasy*, *Boracelle* and Sonatas Nos 2 and 3. He dashed on and off the platform in a hectic kind of way, starting each work

almost before he was seated. There was an exciting freshness, even a sense of danger in his playing, but nothing unconsidered. The *Fantasy* was paced like an epic journey, from the long preparatory section, through the lyrical efflorescence and contrasting repose in the distant central slow section, to a thrilling surge of emotion at the end. The *Boracelle* showed an exquisite sense of rhythmic style, the swaying motion nudged just enough to send the piece floating. Most remarkable of all, perhaps, were Wilde's passion and intelligence – and courage – in the treacherous Second Sonata. His boldness in dramatising the exploratory opening of the development in the first movement was highly original and effective, and his easy melodic grace in the long tune at the heart of the Funeral March made you wonder why most pianists sound so stiff and boring at this point. An inspired, and inspiring, performance, rising fully to all the great moments.

After which, there was hardly room for admiration to increase. But the Third Sonata was splendid, too – forthright and clear, even though Wilde pedalled the stormier passages generously. He took nothing for granted, and really played the piano like an orchestra, thinning out his tone deliberately in the slow movement, rather as string-players might cut down on vibrato. For once, I actually wanted more encores, just to hear what he would do with them. We got two Walzes: in C sharp minor, Op 64 No 2, delicately coloured and affectionate; and in A flat, Op 34 No 1, in all its brilliant splendour. You can hear Wilde again, at the Wigmore Hall, in March.

## A plague on both your houses

Paul Taylor urges zero tolerance for the bleeding-heart compassion and moralising Manhattan Marxism of Wallace Shawn's 'The Fever'

In Wallace Shawn's one-person play, *The Fever*, Clare Coulter talks of finding herself drawn towards a beautiful beggar in a poor country. There's money in her purse; she could give the beggar some of it. "And a voice says, 'Why not all of it? Why not give her all that you have?'" One argument against giving the beggar all that you have – in the literal Christian sense of "all" – is that you would simply be swapping places with this person. For the sake of a few minutes' relief from middle-class liberal guilt, you would be putting the beggar in the same morally dubious position with regard to poverty that you had formerly occupied. And, from one perspective at least, the net improvement in the world would be nil.

Shawn's play – a monologue delivered by a privileged traveller in a smart hotel in a Third World dictatorship – poses as a questioning of all the intellectual presuppositions that enable cosseted Western culturalists to carry on cossetting themselves: that high art and beauty have a trickle-

down, humanising effect; that it's political gradualism, rather than bloody revolution, which will improve the lot of the poor, etc, etc.

The monologue takes us on a spiralling, hallucinatory plunge into a kind of nervous breakdown, though, as this nervous breakdown seems to have been triggered more by what the speaker has seen of the world's wickedness than by personal problems, the degree (if any) to which it is supposed to represent an unbalanced view of reality is left unclear. The production opens at the Royal Court in a week that has exposed afresh the difficulties of taking humane, honourable and effective measures with regard to the destitute and homeless. Zero-tolerance policies or bleeding-heart compassion? Either way, the danger is that the focus of concern will not be on the poor but on the sensitivities of the "haves".

Performed with mesmeric skill by Ms Coulter – whose rapid, driven delivery, rubbery, determined mouth, and

mocking, self-loathing inflections, beautifully bring out the text's disturbing zeal – *The Fever* thinks it has the measure of the intractable contradictions in the guilt-ridden liberal stance. But it is riddled with unexamined contradictions of its own and presumptuous assumptions that make you recoil from its garulous Manhattan Marxism.

I am not, God knows, a religious person but, next to the media appearances of Richard Dawkins, I can't think of anything more likely to make me one than the glib, imprisoning materialism of the outlook on display here. Referring to the chambermaid in the Third World hotel, the speaker offers a savage parody of the Westerners' unspoken attitude towards her – "[she] is repulsive, ignorant – it's not inappropriate that she should live in hell, because to you she really seems like a creature from hell". But the idea that this girl is in "hell" because she is very poor is just the equally impertinent flipside to the old Romantic view that fetishised the supposed simplicity and

wisdom of the destitute and outcast. And if the chambermaid's life is "hell", how would you describe the life of the people on the torture tables to which frequent allusion is made? It is, in any case, typical of the simplistic way *The Fever* divides up the world that you might suppose the poor have the monopoly on being tortured.

Full of lurid imaginings, Shawn's play is vitiated by a failure of imagination. Guilt at her privileged way of life seems to have resulted in the speaker virtually regarding such privilege as the necessary condition of happiness. Irritation at the way she can't escape from referring everything back to herself has produced in her an intermittently reductive response to any art that portrays the feelings of an individual with the disqualification of a moderate income upwards. There were knowing, complacent sniggers from the audience when she wondered why she had ever found *The Cherry Orchard* moving. Chekhov's heroine may have lost her estate, but she's going to an apartment

in Paris, so save your sympathy. By that criterion, Oedipus can go stuff himself, because he lives in a palace.

There's an overarching paradox of art that inspire sympathy and good values do not change the lives of the poor. So why then was *The Fever* written in such a way that (as a note from Shawn indicates) it can "be performed in anyone's flat or home"? This is rather like running a meals-on-wheels service that subjects its recipients to a stern lecture arguing that the nutritional value of food is a complete myth. Being in two minds about art has long been a valid subject for art but I don't think that *The Fever* approaches this theme honourably. It feels more like a case of wanting to have your cake and eat it than like a courageous self-impaling on a double-pronged contradiction. Like Shawn's *Designated Mourner*, premiered at the National Theatre last year, this earlier drama bifurcates the world crudely and then, in effect, says "A plague on both your houses".

I'd spent the afternoon agonising over which work to vote for in the "Best Play" category of the Critics' Circle Awards for 1996. Seeing *The Fever* cleared my mind on this question. Last spring, the Royal Court produced a new drama about a lonely divorcee who breaks the rules of the day centre for the homeless, where she does voluntary work, by taking in and embarking on a relationship with one of its clients. Through a series of misapprehensions, she winds up being publicly humiliated by this temporary lover, who dismisses her attempted kindness as "all middle-class wank. Do something for some poor sod like me. Feel good about yourself... and get a fuck into the bargain." Why this charge is both correct and completely wrong and why the man both has a right and no right to say this to her are issues which this play teases out with a largeness of spirit and imagination that put *The Fever* to shame. I shall be voting for Clare Coulter's *The Thickness of Skin*. To 25 Jan. Royal Court at the Ambassadors, London WC2 (0171-565 5000)

THE WEEK IN REVIEW		David Benedict		
KEY	EXCELLENT			
	GOOD			
	OK			
	POOR			
	DEADLY			
overview		THE FILM	THE TV DRAMA	THE PLAY
		The Mirror Has Two Faces	Rebecca	The Cripple of Inishmaan
		Barbra Streisand produces, directs, writes the theme tune and stars in her remake of a French comedy about a professor who falls for Jeff Bridges and discovers her inner beauty. With Lauren Bacall.	Carlton's two-part dramatisation of Daphne du Maurier's romantic novel with Charles Dance, Diana Rigg and Emilia Fox in the leading role played (spookily) by her mother for the BBC in 1980.	Martin McDonagh follows his debut <i>The Beauty Queen of Leenane</i> with another rural Irish comedy. Nicholas Hytner returns to the theatre directing a first-rate cast including Anita Reeves with designs by Bob Crowley.
critical view		Adam Mars-Jones felt "the eclipse of the character by the director-star sabotages any number of moments". "Bacall is simply wonderful... relentless schmaltz," shuddered the <i>Standard</i> . "This mess of a movie... joyless camp," gasped the <i>Times</i> . "Silly, flibbertigibbet, sentimental and modestly enjoyable," conceded the <i>FT</i> .	Thomas Sutcliffe pointed to Hitchcock, who took "half the time to double the effect". "Inept... a one-dimensional mutilation," stormed the <i>Standard</i> . "Another glossy production from TV's over-used dressing-up box," yawned the <i>Mail</i> . "Exceptional performances," beamed the <i>Times</i> . "Stunning," squealed the <i>Sun</i> .	Paul Taylor "laughed out loud" but was dismayed by the "heartless, opportunistic relationship to the material". "Sentimentality and cruelty march hand in hand," agreed the <i>Telegraph</i> . "A tough, boisterous, gifted play," enthused the <i>Times</i> . "Well directed and beautifully designed... highly accomplished," approved the <i>Guardian</i> .
on view		Cert 15, 124 mins, on general release.	Been and gone, but Hitchcock's marvellous film (fewer breasts, far more eroticism) has been re-released. See it.	In rep at the Cottesloe, Royal National Theatre, London SE1 (0171-928 2252).
our view		Some great one-liners drawn in oversincerity. The definition of a vanity project.	Diana Rigg was the best thing in it, but there was little competition.	Beautifully directed and acted, and very funny, but it collapses into <i>Tales of the Unexpected</i> .

### Troilus and Cressida

by William Shakespeare

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## Planet of the canapés

Roger Clarke on a simian satire

The Woman and the Ape by Peter Hoeg, Harvill, £15.99

Peter Hoeg is Denmark's most celebrated literary export since Hans Christian Andersen and Søren Kierkegaard. Pitched between these two extremes of naive metaphor and dour fatalism lies Hoeg's demesne, where rather chilling, fairy-tale-like things happen in anti-authoritarian contexts. Hoeg's new book will shock the more sedate purchasers of his icy bestseller, *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow*. Its theme is superficially controversial: Madeline, the alcoholic Danish wife of upper-class English conservationist Adam Burden, runs off to live in a London park with a new species of ape, *Pongo hominoides londiniensis*. But this isn't an exploration of bestiality in the style of, say, Walerian Borowczyk's zoophile films. No: this is Fay Wray in Shakespeare's forest of Arden. This is farce, this is satire. This is Oshima's 1987 chimp-fancying film *Max Mon Amour* (Charlotte Rampling spurns diplomat husband for an ape) given social rather than sexual teeth. This is *Planet of the Apes* re-written by Adam Mars-Jones. Could it be, implies Hoeg, that the Queen of England is an ape? Why Hoeg has chosen to satirise the British class system, about which he knows very little, is a mystery. His portraits of cockney yobs and over-bred toffs are ludicrous caricatures. But we are in the land of heavy metaphor. His London is an unrecognisable city viewed through a kaleidoscope of that puzzling and half-cocked literary genre, magic realism. The opening scene: a sailing ship hoves into Wapping's docklands like something out of the pseudo-Elizabethan passages in Eliot's *The Waste Land*. On board a new kind of ape is being smuggled. Shaved and made articulate, it later passes for a human being called Erasmus (Darwin reference). Erasmus's journey through the undergrowth of London – depicted as awash with carnivorous predators – and

his redemption of Madeline is the core of the book. Hoeg comes across as a maverick with a hippy social conscience in this and earlier books. When he writes about "feudalistic class supremacy" you can tell he doesn't like it, and Adam seems disliked by his creator not for any moral lapse but for having genteel table manners, the result of "400 years of evolution". When the hue and cry goes up after Madeline and Erasmus elope, Hoeg unleashes his most direct attack. Erasmus was "like the Falklands war only on a smaller scale, a dragon, an economy-sized King-Kong tailor-made for taking the public mind off such problems as the general decline and impoverishment of the city, race riots and widespread crime". I couldn't help but be disappointed by Hoeg's book, which is shapeless and confused, didactic and dreamy at the same time. I found his take on British social structures frankly risible, like a bad male writer trying hard to write female roles. His oblique jousting against colonial attitudes and snooty expats, monied families and corrupt government is all very worthy but it never rings true. When the story becomes a tale of racial/genetic identity and a fable about education (with the ape educated like Frankenstein's monster), the more interesting violent and sexual strands have petered out. I look forward to Martin Amis going over to Denmark to draw conclusions from their biker gangs with rocket launchers, their beastie porn and their anarchistic drugs commune, Christiania, in the heart of Copenhagen. I far prefer the bizarre denouement of a little-known book by John Collier, published in 1931: *His Monkey wife, or, Married to a Chimp*. This hairy bride snuffs out the nuptial candle with a "prehensile foot" before the wedding night begins. Hoeg, essentially a puritan, would never have such a decadent detail in this unnecessarily wholesome book.

## Out of body experience

Alberto Manguel follows the progress of an undiplomatic corpse

Santa Evita by Tomás Eloy Martínez, Doubleday, £15.99

A few years ago, I took my mother to see the musical *Evita*. My father had been Perón's ambassador to Israel, and my mother considered herself a more-than-passing acquaintance of Evita Perón. Evita would swoop by our house in Buenos Aires and take my mother on shopping sprees to Paris or Rome from which she returned loaded with gifts and stories. My mother left the show humming the tunes but unimpressed by the heroine. "Evita wasn't like that at all," she complained. "She was the feistiest, most ambitious, brilliant, ruthless and seductive creature I ever met. I don't think anyone could succeed in showing you what she was like." I'm not certain if Tomás Eloy Martínez, in *Santa Evita*, has succeeded in recreating that Superwoman to my mother's satisfaction. What he has accomplished is the most powerful work of fiction to come from Latin America since *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. "Work of fiction" is a misnomer: Martínez uses the devices of the novelist but only to establish his facts, in the tradition of Michelet or Lytton Strachey. This artful telling allows him to grasp Evita's huge myth, made up of events that have since echoed and grown in the popular imagination, and give it a coherent shape. Martínez's own search for Evita's story is woven through the book. As a young journalist in the 1960s, interested in the convulsive history of Argentina from Perón's ascent to power in 1946 to his fall in 1955, he convinced the ageing demagogue in his exile in Spain to grant him a series of interviews that became Perón's memoirs. These were an imaginary recreation of the past, largely invented by Perón's magus-like secretary, López Rega. Intrigued by fiction becoming fact, Martínez decided to turn fact into fiction: *The Novel of Perón*, in 1985, told the "true" story of Perón's progress. Martínez realised that, Perón, though important, was not at the core of that mass of images, myths and stories that define Argentina. At the core of Argentina's imagination lies Evita. "What are the elements that went into the making of the myth of Evita?", he wonders. Her meteoric rise (the answers), her young death, the love Perón supposedly felt for her, her Robin Hood-like Foundation for the Poor, the fact that she fed poor people's dreams of bridal trousseaus, refrigerators or artificial limbs, the fetishistic attributes of Evita the Saint that made people want to touch her so that many refused to spend the money she flung at them and framed it like a sacred



Dinner with a diva: Alberto Manguel's parents with Eva Perón in Buenos Aires, c 1950

relic. Finally, there was the never-completed Monument to the *Descamisados* (the "Shirtless Ones," as followers of Perón were called) that Evita wanted built as her Taj Mahal to the people. Every myth requires an open end, something unfinished. The monument symbolises that expectation. Roaches to riches, tangos to tiaras – there are few, thanks to Lloyd Webber and Madonna, who don't know the early chapters of the Evita story. Less well known is Perón's wish to have her corpse embalmed after her death from cancer, and the fact that after his ousting in 1955 the body disappeared until it was (some say miraculously) repatriated in 1971. Unknown by all, except its kidnappers or guardians, is what happened to the body in the intervening 16 years – until the publication of *Santa Evita*.

For many months, Martínez gathered his evidence, reconstructing Evita's life, interviewing everyone who might bear witness. As he says, there are only two characters in the book whom he never met, one of them Evita herself. Again and again, he

came across trivial lies, such as Evita's birthplace or her age, invented by Perón and Evita for no obvious reasons. Why did they lie? "Because they could no longer tell what was true and what was false, and because, consummate actors both, they had begun to portray themselves in other roles. They lied because they had decided that reality would be what they wanted it to be. They did the same thing novelists do."

Like their characters, novelists fall prey to melodramatic situations. In 1989, when he thought he had all the facts, Martínez received a phone call. The voice told him that, since Martínez had given such an accurate picture of Perón, he had been chosen as the recipient of Evita's real story.

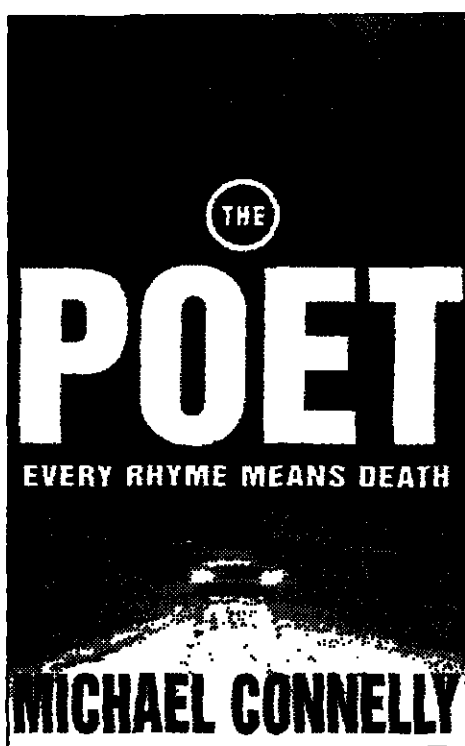
Nothing that any so-called magic realist might care to invent touches the story of Evita's body. If a country can find its representation in a person – as Argentina did in Evita – then to possess that person, dead or alive, lends the illusion of possessing the country. The itinerant corpse brings to mind other grisly and adored relics whose

possession meant something vaster than themselves: Rasputin's prepiece kept by a couple of exiled *grandes dames* in memory of Mother Russia, St Catherine's emaciated arm clutched by General Franco on his sick bed as proof that Christ was on his side.

Evita's corpse was pursued by an enamoured colonel, bedded by a major who murdered his wife for its jealous sake, hidden in the projectionist's cabin of a Buenos Aires movie theatre, where the projectionist's daughter played with it as with a doll. Not only did the corpse carry within it the country's agonies and libido; it dragged in its wake the old-fashioned mummy's curse that touches each of the participants in the saga – including Martínez, who suffered, during the writing, from a series of misadventures.

Novel or chronicle, hagiography or history: the reader is ultimately indifferent as to which shelf a book is exiled. Astonishing, intelligent, horrific, humorous, compassionate, *Santa Evita* tells a story more riveting than any fabulation, and in the process reinvents a country and its heroine.

**The parties are over, the turkey's eaten (at last), the sky's grey and life seems flatter than usual.**



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## The incredible voyager

Frank McLynn acclaims the prince of whales

Herman Melville: A Biography Vol 1, 1819-1851 by Hershel Parker, Johns Hopkins University Press, £27.50

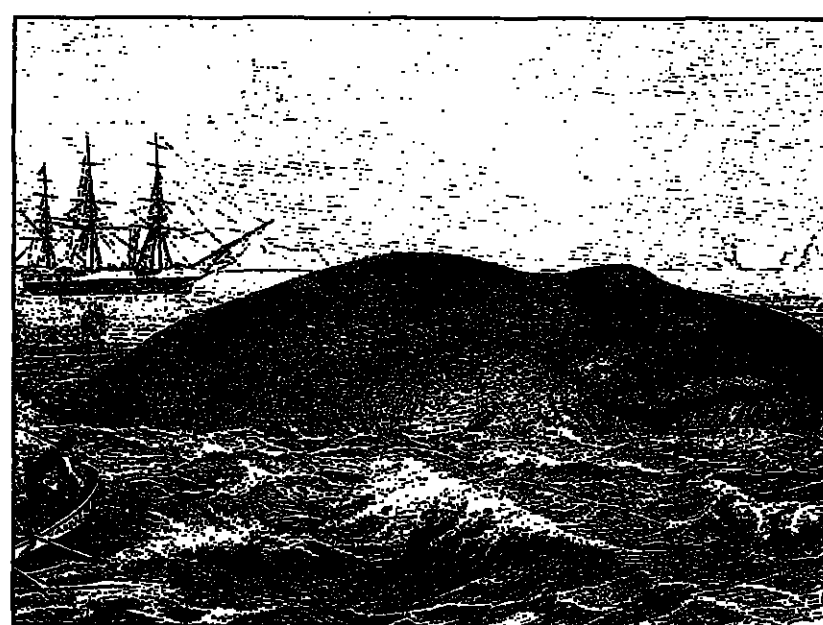
What have the following got in common: R L Stevenson, Lawrence of Arabia, C G Jung, F R Leavis, Jack London, Orson Welles, D H Lawrence, Robert Graves, Albert Camus, E M Forster and Somerset Maugham? This list could be extended almost infinitely, and the answer is that all were passionate admirers of Herman Melville. Yet, in Britain at least, Melville seems to have faded from the legions of the literary lost who are paid formal obeisance but never read.

Unfortunately, Hershel Parker's biography, which takes his hero through the first 32 years of life at an average of 30 pages per year, seems unlikely to reverse this trend. This is American academic biography at its stodgiest, long on exhaustive scholarship, short on explanation as to why Melville has enthused so many talented admirers. There is no real sense of America's greatest writer.

A New Yorker, Melville shipped out to Liverpool as a deckhand after working as a bank clerk and teacher. He next joined a whaler, jumped ship in the Marquesas and lived among Typee cannibals before serving on a US frigate. He began writing in 1846, after marrying the daughter of a Chief Justice of Massachusetts and retiring to farm in Pittsfield.

As a Melvillean, I have often wondered why so many people are blind to his towering genius. The criticisms seem to be, in ascending order of seriousness: that the author of *Moby-Dick* wrote about the politically incorrect subject of whale hunting; that there is "too much" in his novels; that he is "dated"; his preoccupation with evil has no more resonance for a post-Auschwitz world; and that his masterwork is a bloated Leviathan of German mysticism, New England transcendentalism and sub-Carlylean metaphysics.

Melville was not, contrary to popular belief, the famous *homo unius libri* – the man who wrote one book. *Redburn* and *White-Jacket* are classic sea stories. *Typee* and *Omoo*, describing Melville's roamings in the Pacific from 1841 to 1844, launched a thousand romantic adventures in the South Seas. Melville was also a master of the short story and impressionistic piece. Among his neglected achievements in this genre are the novella *Billy Budd*, which inspired Benjamin Britten to produce his finest opera, and the haunting *Benito Cereno*, which director John Huston spent half his life unsuccessfully trying to film.



Whale-hunting in the South Seas

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In his story *Bartleby the Scrivener*, Melville effectively created the *avant-garde* alienated hero, while in *Pierre* he anticipated modernism. His uncompleted *The Confidence-Man* joins those other enigmatic "unfinisheds", *Edwin Drood* and *Weir of Hermiston*.

But it was with *Moby-Dick* in 1851 that Melville unquestionably joined the world's "top ten" novelists. An academic industry has grown up around it. Symbol-hunters have managed to attribute almost every conceivable interpretation to *Moby-Dick*. The meaning of a great book can never be exhausted. But against those who argue that this is a baggy monster, a Yankee madman's answer to Laurence Sterne, I would submit that *Moby-Dick* is delightful perfection.

Dealing with the profoundest themes, it is a marvel of symmetry and balance. This is achieved through Melville's genius in unerringly locating the point of equilibrium as he constantly navigates between naturalism and symbolism, good and evil, conscious and unconscious. *Moby-Dick* is first and foremost the story of a quest, by the monomaniac Captain Ahab, for the white whale. But the quest is also the search for ultimate reality. It would have been easy for Melville to allow the minutiae of whaling to get out of hand, or for metaphysical speculations to make the maritime adventure a mere afterthought. But the

quest for the whale deepens the speculations and is deepened by them. One can see why Jung, with his emphasis on "one world" neither purely material nor psychological, was so drawn to this work. There is a similar interpenetration in Melville's treatment of evil. He implicitly denounces the Christian ideal of perfection as a metaphysical misunderstanding: "good and evil braided be". The narrator Ishmael's survival at the novel's end denotes the tacking between the two perspectives. To make humanism prevail when there is no logical reason for hope completes *Moby-Dick* on an ambivalent note that mirrors the ambiguity of all that has gone before.

Melville is never greater as an artist than when, unlike Ahab, he allows the heart to resist the head. At a cerebral level, though, he was one of those who can believe in the reality of evil but not good: "Though in many of its aspects this visible world seems formed in love, the invisible spheres were formed in fright."

Melville's work will never be popular with readers who feel that a novel must deal primarily with relationships or else display political commitment. But for those who revel in whale-hunting scenes, who thrill to encounters with typhoons, sharks, giant squid and pirates, and who like the brew served up with lashings of St Paul, Kant and Hegel, *Moby-Dick* will remain one of the wonders of the world.

Decipher pension

By Clifford Germ

Pension is a word that has many meanings. In the context of the pension scheme, it refers to the amount of money that is paid to a person who has retired from work. This is often a fixed sum of money, but it can also be a percentage of the person's previous salary. The pension scheme is a way of saving for retirement, and it is important to understand how it works in order to make the most of it.

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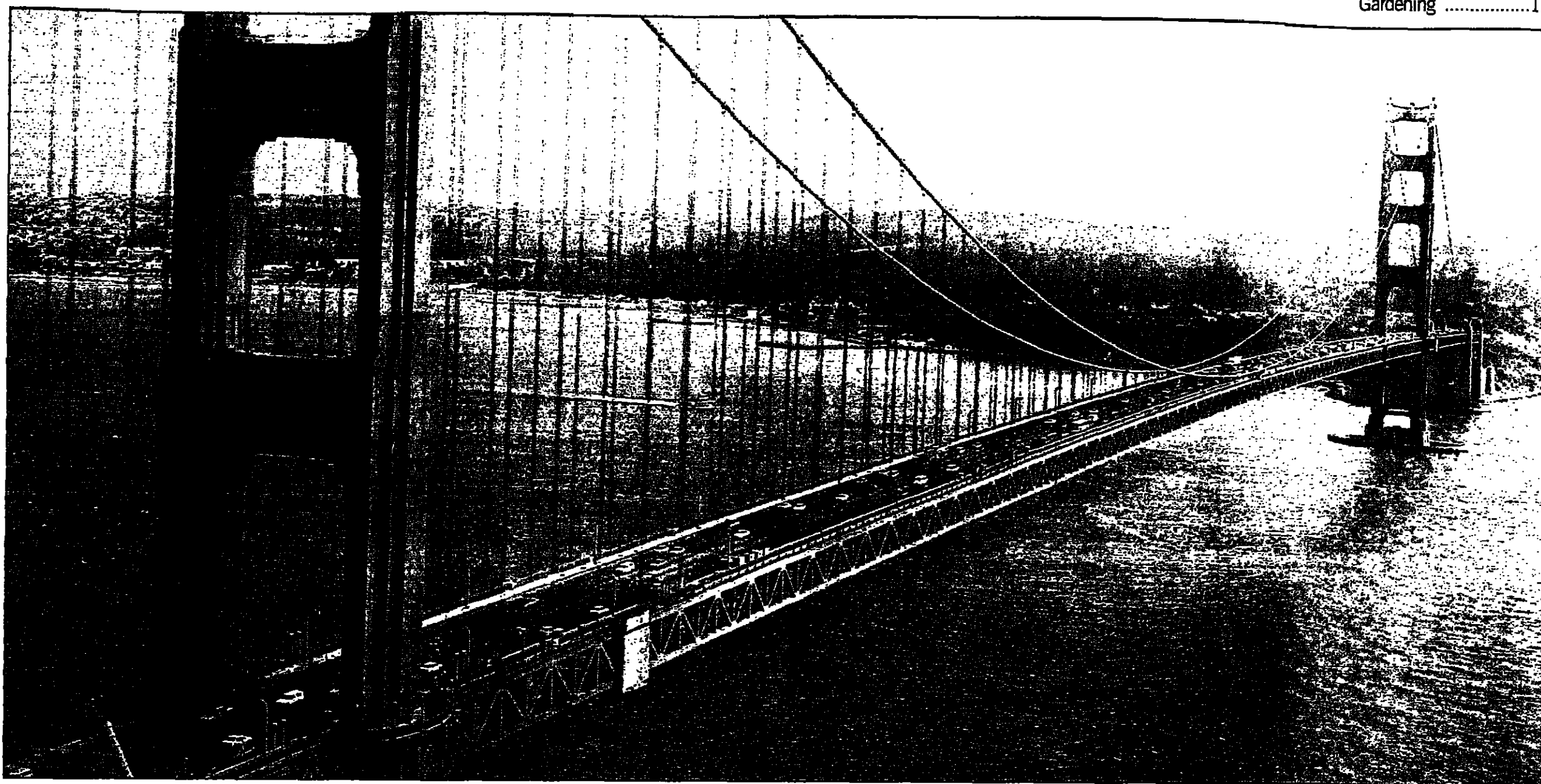






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## All across the nation

... there's a strange vibration. Nigel Williamson revisits San Francisco

On 14 January, 1967, more than 20,000 hippies gathered in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park for the first "human be-in". The event marked the beginning of the summer of love, a date which now ranks in local history with the 1849 gold rush and the 1906 earthquake. The city is now preparing to celebrate the 30th anniversary of that extraordinary year of psychedelic drugs and music.

Visitors arriving at San Francisco airport are met by an exhibition of images of Jerry Garcia. Janis Joplin and other icons of the flower power era. Every guidebook to the city contains a eulogy to "the spirit of '67" and a trip to the Haight-Ashbury district is high (pun intended) on any tourist trail. A few sad and notable casualties apart, it seems that old hippies never die: they simply become tourist attractions.

It's a far cry from the scene 30 years ago. The official police report on the "human be-in" complained of "hippies high on LSD obstructing and creating a nuisance". Dozens were bundled away in paddy wagons while the Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service and Jefferson Airplane played for free and Timothy Leary, the LSD guru, chanted "turn on, tune in, drop out". Over the coming months, to the consternation of the city authorities, an estimated 200,000 young people heeded the call and moved into the area around Haight and Ashbury Streets, a short stroll from Golden Gate Park. Haight, as it inevitably was known, became the hippie capital of the world.

Some were drawn by the drugs and the "free love", others had an interest in Eastern mysticism. But above all they were drawn by the music. In addition to the Dead, the Airplane and Quicksilver there were Country Joe and the Fish, the Steve Miller Band, Santana and Janis Joplin, all living, playing and getting high within a few blocks of each other. It was an extraordinary flowering of musical talent.

Today the sites associated with flower power's brief blooming have become much visited. Fifty-somethings who look as if they took one trip too many, and kids who weren't even born in 1967, mingle in Golden Gate

Park, strumming guitars and smoking dope. There are more ponytails than at a gymkhana and sufficient acres of swirling tie-dye to induce a permanent migraine.

Top of any psychedelic heritage tour is 710 Ashbury, a large, rambling house where the Grateful Dead lived in communal style throughout 1967. It was famously busted for drugs at the end of that summer in a police raid that marked the beginning of the end of the hippie dream. The Dead moved out in March the following year. A sign put up by the owners asks the legion of "Dead heads" not to ring the doorbell. Those wishing to pay tribute to the late Jerry Garcia are invited to leave flowers: "If you do respect Jerry and believe in peace and love then you will respect our wishes and good karma will follow you in your life."

On the corner of Haight and Cole Street, a two-minute walk from the Dead's house, was the Straight Theater. As a farewell to the area, the Dead parked two flatbed trucks across the street, ran a cable from inside and played the free concert pictured on their Live Dead album. The theatre was chaotically run as a hippie community centre and didn't have a dance licence, so the bands playing there had to pretend to be giving dancing lessons. Santana were among those who got their start here. Today a "thrill store" (charity shop) stands on the site.

At the other end of Cole Street is the Panhandle, a thin, green artery running parallel to the Haight and leading into Golden Gate Park. Here the Diggers, a group of anarcho-syndicalists, dispensed free meals to hungry hippies, and it was also here in June 1967 that Jimi Hendrix made a legendary impromptu appearance with equipment borrowed from the Jefferson Airplane.

Almost every street around the Haight has tales to tell of rock 'n' roll craziness.

At 112 Lyon Street, Janis Joplin lived with Country Joe McDonald. Unsurprisingly, her rowdy lifestyle did not endear her to the neighbours and Janis was evicted early in 1968. Yet it was not sex, drugs or even loud music that were her downfall here: Joplin was thrown out for a breach of the "no pets" clause in her lease. Today a sign in the house

next door tells those who come to gaze at the scene of her excesses, "RAD". On closer inspection it stands not for Remember the Acid Dream, but for Residents Against Drugs.

An infamous palace of rock and roll debauchery was the Jefferson Airplane's mansion at 2400 Fulton Street. The Airplane were always the aristocrats of San Francisco rock, with a big record company advance which they invested in an imposing four-storey house with Doric columns. The opera singer Caruso sheltered in the house during the 1906 earthquake, but in the Airplane's heyday the mansion rocked with infamous parties, often lasting days at a time. One celebrated bash is pictured on the front of the band's album *Bless Its Pointed Little Head*, with bassist Jack Casady passed out with his hand still gripped around a bottle.

With views over both Golden Gate Park and the ocean, the mansion occupies one of the prime real estate sites in the city, and the Airplane who once sung "up the revolution" eventually made a very capitalist profit on the property.

Another much-visited location is the imposing mansion overlooking Buena Vista Park where the Steve Miller Band made their early recordings in a basement studio, before the singer went on to stardom as the Space Cowboy, the Gangster of Love and The Joker. The house was later owned by ex-Hollie Graham Nash. It is much photographed by fans who believe, wrongly, that it is the home he sang about so smugly in *Our House* "with two cats in the yard", with Crosby, Stills and Young.

If Golden Gate Park was the birthplace of the summer of love, then Buena Vista Park at the other end of the Haight was its final resting place. The dream was too good to last and by October 1967 hard drugs and street crime were rife in the area. The Diggers organised a mock funeral in the park, at which they buried the sign from the Psychedelic Shop at 1535 Haight Street, the world's first such emporium, where half of the space was given over to a meditation room called the "calm center".

Where the Haight hippies once burnt their incense and contemplated the nature of the

cosmos, you can today buy a take-away pizza.

By 1968 most of the musicians had moved out of the Haight, many of them the short distance across Golden Gate Bridge to the clean air and giant redwoods of Marin County. Just over the bridge is the harbour of Sausalito, the original setting of Otis Redding's classic "Sittin' On The Dock Of The Bay". The soul singer had become a hippie hero following his storming appearance at the Monterey pop festival and in August 1967 was playing a week-long residency in San Francisco. When his downtown hotel was besieged by female fans he was invited to stay on one of the ramshackle houseboats in the dock and the result was his best - and last - song. He died in a plane crash three months later.

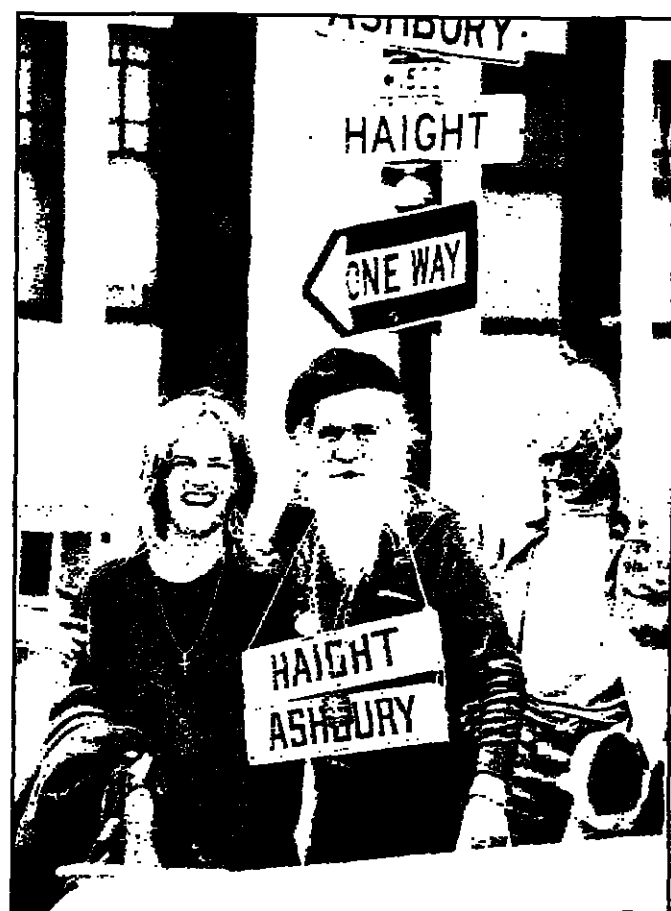
San Francisco has always been a city rich in musical association. Al Jolson died here after recording a radio show with Bing Crosby, and Billie Holiday was busted for possession of narcotics. The suite where she was raided at the Mark Twain Hotel now commands a premium rate and is decorated with press cuttings of her arrest.

Fittingly, the birthplace of flower power also hosted the death of punk when the Sex Pistols split up in the city after an epic fight between Johnny Rotten, Sid Vicious and manager Malcolm McLaren at the Miyako Hotel.

Yet, musically, it will always be the summer of love for which San Francisco is best remembered. Anyone who was ever briefly touched with the spirit of 1967 will find Haight-Ashbury an evocative trip down memory lane. Get out the tie dye and the bell-bottoms, wipe the dust off those scratchy old records - and be sure to wear some flowers in your hair.

If you're going to San Francisco ...

Go now. Nigel Williamson flew just before the latest fares cut, with TWA via St Louis for £346 return; he stayed at the Californian Hotel (001 415 885 2500) in the city centre for \$89 (£53) per night. Now, you can fly non-stop from London Heathrow to San Francisco on British Airways (0345 222111), United (0181-990 9900) or Virgin Atlantic (01293 747471). The latter has a "MegaSaver" fare of £307 return, including tax, if you book before 25 January.



Top: San Francisco, the pot of gold that lies at the end of the rainbow

PHOTOGRAPH: TONY STONE

Above: 1967 summer of love now ranks in local history alongside the 1849 gold rush and the 1906 earthquake. Almost every street around the Haight has tales to tell of rock 'n' roll craziness

PHOTOGRAPH: CURBIS

### GIVE VIENNA A WHIRL

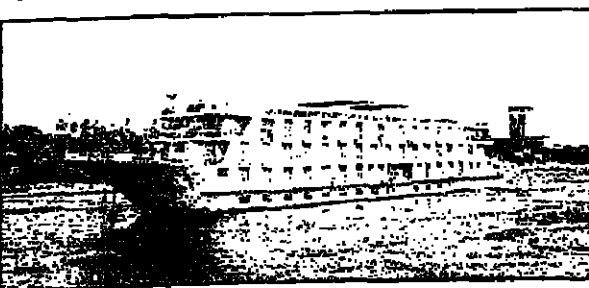


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# Jewel in the muck

Cathy Packe remembers her student days in Durham

A poll of a few friends of mine showed they have widely differing memories of their first day at university. Inexplicably, I remember one phrase from the address by the Vice-Chancellor to new students. He described the city of Durham, our new home, as "a jewel in the muck-heap". Although this is rather damning of the countryside immediately around, his description of the city was an understatement.

If at all possible, Durham is best approached by rail. As you pull into the station, the view of the medieval cathedral is stunning. The cathedral can be seen from almost anywhere in the city; the uninterrupted panorama from my first college room was unblemished, as most of the new building in Durham has been on the outskirts.

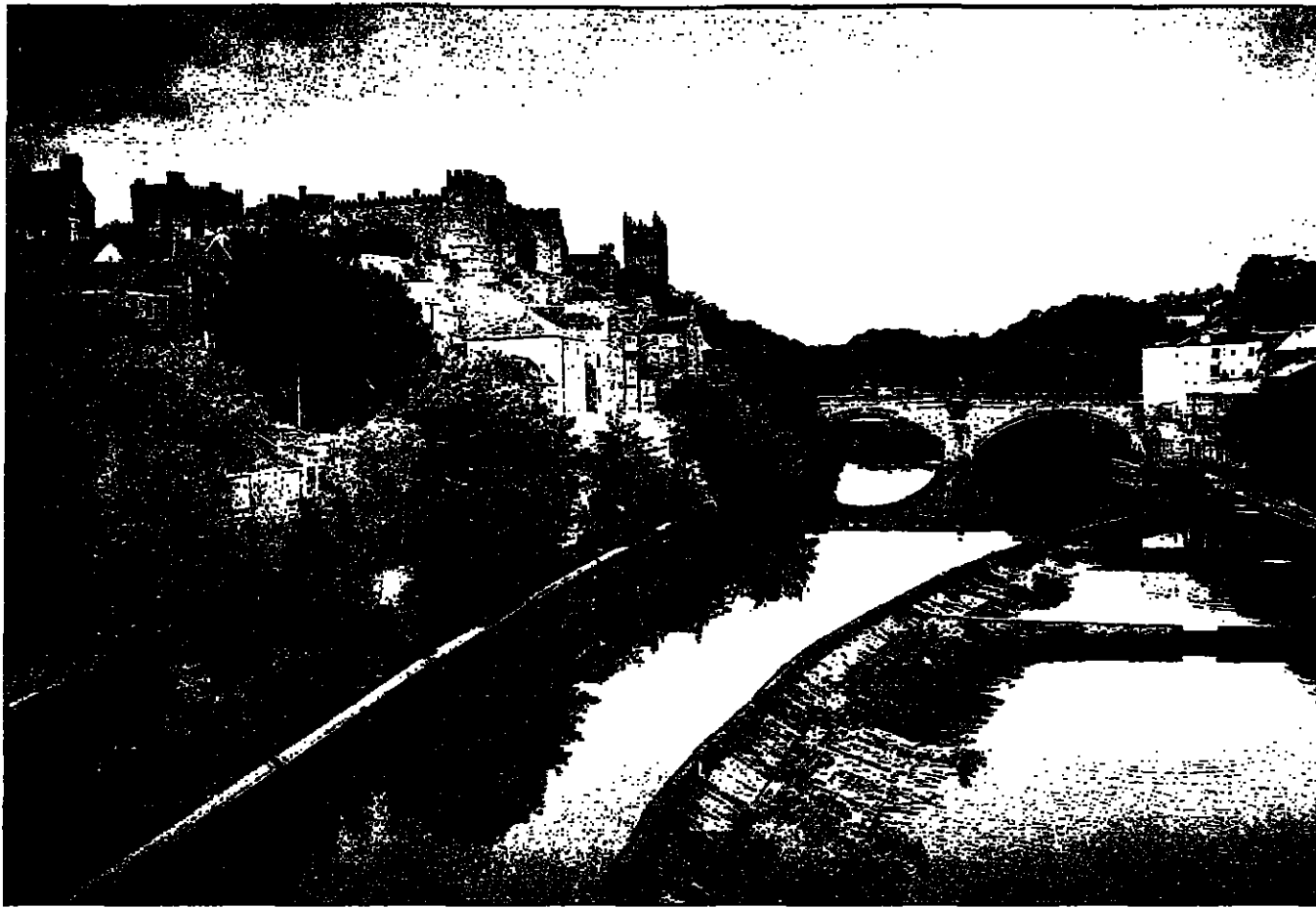
The historic heart of the city is built on a peninsula, gouged out by a loop in the river Wear, and densely wooded along its banks. The river separates the old centre from the rest of the city, and keeps it aloof from modern life.

For centuries, city life revolved around Palace Green and the few cobbled streets leading from it. This is a village green on a grand scale. The cathedral and castle face each other at opposite ends; the original university library runs between them; on the fourth side is a row of almshouses now converted into a restaurant.

For most students, the cathedral is just a landmark in the city. I remember it mainly as the place to go for afternoon tea. These days there are other places to go – and no doubt prices have gone up – but when I was an undergraduate, a scone, jam, cream and a cup of tea in the cathedral's Undercroft restaurant cost 27p.

Although the bell, chiming out every 15 minutes, still regulates the pace of life in Durham, the cathedral itself no longer dominates life as it would have done in the days of Saints Bede and Cuthbert. That honour now goes to the university, which employs a large percentage of the population, and owns many of the city's oldest buildings. But town and gown are inextricably entwined: the university was founded when the bishops donated their official residence to become University College – now known to all students simply as "Castle".

Gradually, other colleges were founded, and the university is still expanding, but students remain in the castle, living at the most stylish student address in the country.



Durham Castle: the most stylish student address in the country

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID ROSE

It is also a great place for entertaining. All the colleges hold an annual ball, some more formal than others. I remember the ball at the castle as the highlight of the social calendar, with champagne served in the courtyard, dinner in the great hall, and a cartoon projected on to the keep.

From Palace Green, cobbled streets tumble down and join up with The Bailey and Saddler Street, which leads into the Market Place. Many of the old houses provide student accommodation or lecture theatres; others are homes for the academic staff. I particularly remember peering every day into

the study of Duncow Cottage and being amazed by the sheer number of books on the shelves, and the piles of papers on the floor.

Not all of Durham is ancient, of course. In the sixties several new colleges were built, as well as the students' union building, Duncow House. Events here were at the opposite end of the social scale from those in the castle. The surroundings were austere in daylight and cheerless at night – even under the flashing lights of the Friday discos. It is difficult to imagine that students still go there, as I did, for a hip night out. But maybe small groups of female undergraduates do still dance around their handbags, while spotty youths inevitably eye them up.

This area is ageing badly, with the concrete now streaked and dirty. But as a place to look out from, rather than to look at, Duncow House is hard to beat.

Durham is a magnificent place to be a student – small enough to be manageable, but with the facilities of a larger university; and a beautiful setting in which to spend three years of one's life.

If I have a regret about my student days, it is that student life – and this probably applies anywhere – tends to be one-dimensional, which meant there was an awful lot of Durham that I missed. Given the chance to be a student again, I wouldn't hesitate to go back.

## Best years of our lives

Student travel writing competition

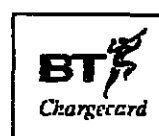
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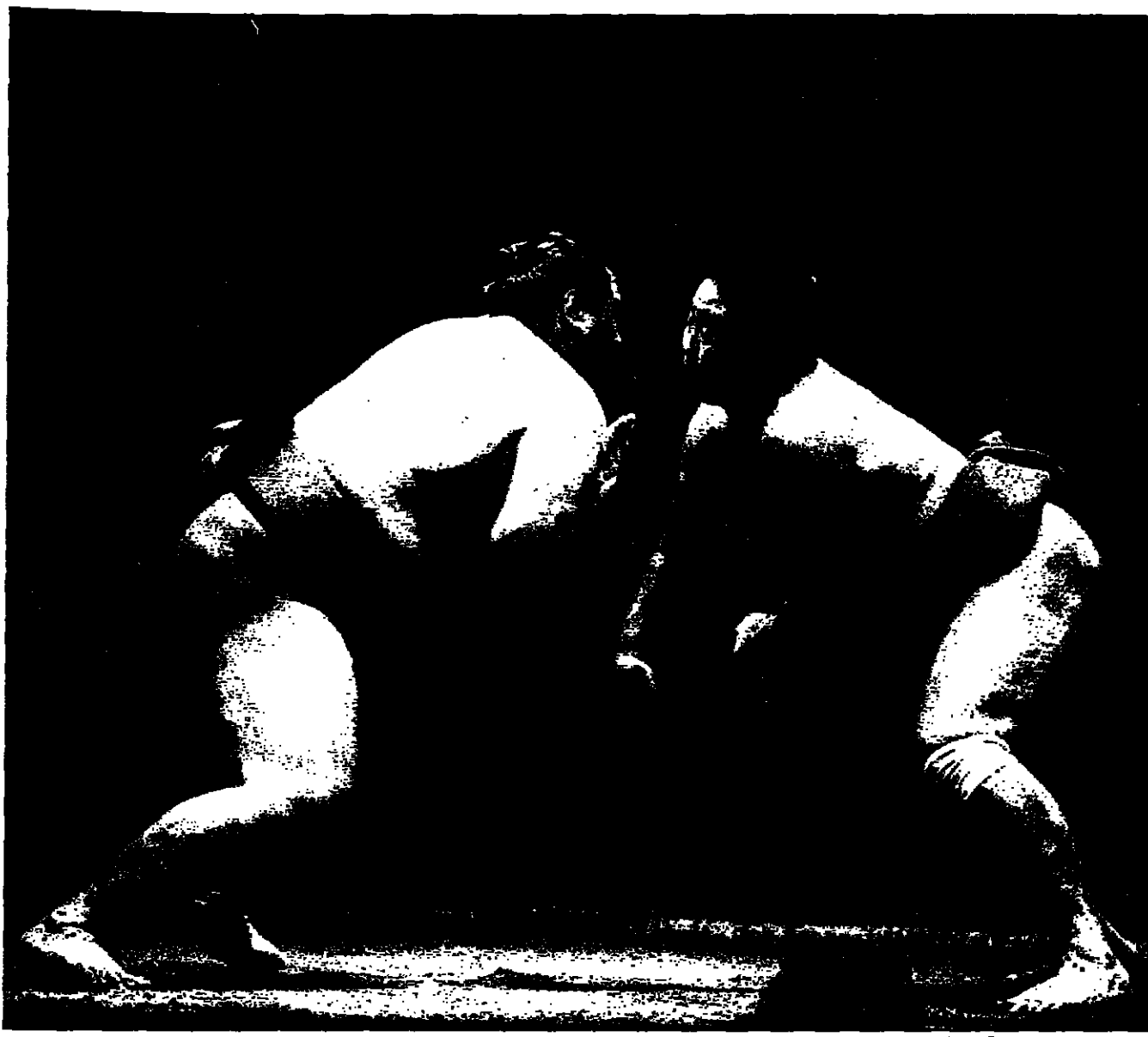
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# Long, hot sumo

By Kate Mikhail



PHOTOGRAPH: ALLSPORT

**A**rchais, ritualistic and stereotypically Japanese, Sumo wrestling, could easily leave you cold. But experience the energy of a packed auditorium, witness the spectacle of two huge human masses hurtling headlong into each other and you'll be hooked – transfixed in a mixture of awe and disbelief.

When Japanese friends sat me down in front of the television set to watch a Sumo match I can't say I was much impressed; and quickly tired of what seemed a very brief and futile scrap between two staggeringly fat wrestlers. But given that I was visiting Tokyo during one of only six annual tournaments, I decided that seeing this major cultural event in the flesh – and loads of it – could not be missed. I hoped it might even give me a better understanding of the Japanese psyche.

Tokyo's National Sumo Stadium, in Ryogoku, eastern Tokyo, is a few minutes from the Metro (Ryogoku stop) and towers over an otherwise uniform urban landscape. The build-up to the match begins well before you step inside – walking from the Metro to the stadium, you are more than likely to find yourself accompanied by one or two contestants who stroll nonchalantly along with a certain arrogance and presence that only such an unearthly bulk can achieve.

The thought of these men living and training in their Sumo "stables" makes them seem in even more of another world than they already appear as they thunder down the street.

Sumo giants, who weigh an average of 300lb (21 stone), are considered national heroes and sex symbols. They earn big money, command respect and, being such a prestigious and wealthy catch, tend to marry the most petite and stunning of Japanese women.

Having said that, their image took a serious pummeling this year, with allegations of corruption, tax evasion, *yakuza* (Mafia) connections and fight-rigging. Fans were devastated, particularly as the claims came from an ex-champ. Onaruto, who mysteriously died shortly before he was due to give a press conference – but not before he wrote his book, *Bout-Rigging*, which accused the *yakuza* of buying wrestlers and rigging matches.

Walking into the stadium was like entering a temple. Far-off chanting led me to where the action was taking place: a vast space with seats reaching

## Weighty matters

**Getting there:** The cheapest way to reach the Japanese capital is on an air ticket to Australia. For example, Flightbookers (0171-757 2468) has a fare to Sydney via Tokyo of £886 on All Nippon Airways for departures today; you save £60 for mid-week travel, but be warned that availability is limited. You are allowed a stopover in Tokyo en route in either direction. If you cannot travel to Australia, Creative Tours (0171-495 1775) sells a discounted fare of £809 non-stop on Japan Airlines.

**Getting Sumo tickets:** This month's Sumo tournament in Tokyo starts tomorrow and runs to Sunday 26 January. The National Sumo Stadium is in eastern Tokyo, and is very close to Ryogoku, on the JR Sobu line. If you have any problems, the Japan National Tourist Organisation's tourist information centre has staff who speak English and are very helpful (3502 1461).

The next two tournaments in Tokyo are: 9-23 March and 11-25 May.

It is not necessary to get up at the crack of dawn to queue for tickets, as you will invariably be told by everyone you ask. Not, at least, if you go in the first week, or early in the second, before the big players start coming face-to-face in the build up to the final battle. Tickets can be bought on the day from the box office, at a cost of only 1,500 yen (£8).

**Getting information:** Japanese National Tourist Organisation: 5th Floor, 20 Savile Row, London W1X 1AE (0171-734 9638).

orate seats which no amount of money can buy.

Luckily I'd come equipped with a *bento* box – this is a tasty Japanese lunch box with rice, vegetables and a choice of meat or fish – so settled down on a floor cushion, chopsticks in hand, eyes glued to the stage to see what happens when an irresistible force hits an immovable object.

The scene was striking. The medieval splendour and ancient rituals were totally at odds with 20th-century Japan – a country where cash machines talk to you and one of the latest female pop stars to be inundated with fan mail is a virtual reality computer creation.

The atmosphere inside the stadium is very relaxed and officials are little in evidence, so if you want a better view, your best bet is to grab your camera and stroll down to the front, where you can stand at a safe distance from tumbling wrestlers and catch all the skill of the fight.

Originally, Sumo was a religious Shinto ceremony carried out for the benefit of the Gods. The ring is made of clay and outlined with a thick, circular rope. The rules are simple: the first to be pushed from the ring or to touch the ground with any part of his body other than the soles of his feet is the loser.

The lead-up to each fight is mesmerising, with lots of salt-throwing to purify the ring and thigh-slapping and foot-stamping to ward off evil spirits, honour the gods and psych out the opposition. The rounds only last a couple of minutes each, but the bursts of energy are fast and furious. Contestants shove, slap, grapple or get a good belt grip to send their opponent flying from the ring.

The battle is fierce, as only those at the top of this profession get any financial rewards and success is far from guaranteed. As the higher-ranking wrestlers take to the ring, the seats fill up, the tension rises and the crowds, stocked up with copious amounts of food and drink, become increasingly rowdy.

I never actually made it to my seat, which I assume was way up in the gods, and not knowing one wrestler from the next, did not wait to see who were that day's champions. Instead, I left feeling culturally sated, charged up for a Friday night in the bustling all-night bars of Shinjuku, and with a slightly clearer idea of what makes the Japanese tick.



## something to declare

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The enterprising tour operator Regent Holidays (0117-921 1711) this week launched the first-ever short break to the former Soviet republic of Georgia. A long weekend in the capital, Tbilisi, costs £723 including flights from Heathrow via Istanbul, accommodation and Georgian visa. So far there have been no takers. The current Foreign Office advice for Georgia says: "Visits by road to most parts of Georgia can be made in relative safety, although travel at night outside Tbilisi should be avoided if possible. There have been recent outbreaks of diphtheria in Georgia. Seek medical advice about precautionary measures before travelling."

### True or false

The British Tourist Authority wants Tyneside to become a training ground for foreign lager louts.

True, at least according to the BTAs youth-oriented magazine, *UK The Guide*. As well as the usual warnings, eg not to bring illegal drugs into Britain, the *Guide* makes recommendations that could lead to some truly immoderate behaviour.

The magazine suggests an evening in Newcastle-upon-Tyne: "Saying that Geordies like a drink is like saying the Pope likes to say the occasional prayer." On an evening out with friends, the *Guide* advises, you could say "Whey ye bugger man! I'm ganning down toon to get mortal drunk and find some tottie." A Geordie phrase book is included, with handy lines such as "Hoy up – To be sick" and "Top tottie – Very desirable young lady". In the pub, you are warned to avoid dominoes ("the world's most boring game") and to steer clear of Vimto, which "Sounds like toilet cleaner and doesn't taste much better".

Should the "tottie" idea go according to plan, a photograph of a condom machine is captioned with: "Fancy a quick one? There's more in the pub to try than beer and food, although some things may not be much use after 10 pints of beer." Perhaps this is why Kevin Keegan decided to leave.



### A likely story

"the year 2000 will begin right here – at the leading edge of the sixth Greenwich time signal beep" – The Independent, last Saturday.

Mike Perry of *Middlesex responds*: "I was surprised to read this in Simon Calder's article on Greenwich. I would have expected him to have noticed by now that half the world's time zones are ahead of GMT, so at the time of the aforementioned beep it will be lunchtime on 1 January, 2000, in, for example, New Zealand."

"What makes it even more surprising is that last year you printed an article about holiday companies that were offering tours to

various remote Pacific islands just west of the International Date Line, where the year 2000 really will begin, and when it will still only be midday on 31 December, 1999, in Greenwich."

Simon Calder replies: Mr Perry is right – but, I suggest, we both are. Space-time is defined from an arbitrary origin at the Royal Observatory. So I reckon Greenwich can cheerfully claim that an arbitrary date

marking an event approximately 2,000 years – and miles – away should start on the Greenwich Meridian, the arbitrary line through London SE10.

Mr Perry correctly points out that we carried a story last year on the Chatham Islands, one challenger for the place where 2000 will begin. But I bet that a pint of Spitfire, if available, will cost a lot more in the Chathams than the present £1.60 at Hardy's Tavern on the Greenwich Meridian.

### Bargain of the week

The new Aer Lingus companion fare on flights from Stansted to Dublin is £109 for two, including tax – £54.50 per person. Better still, for only an extra £25 each, you can travel onwards to Cork, Galway, Kerry, Shannon or Sligo – and return from the same

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## Fiona MacAulay visits the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery

cutting

# THE HOLD

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**P**aths help to define the main lines of a design in a garden. They do not all need to be of the same importance. The main thoroughfares will perhaps be wide and surfaced with something hardwearing, but there may be an interconnecting web of narrow paths that are no more than beaten earth. You need to get the main lines of communication sorted out before you move on to the rest of the design for your plot.

A wide, swirling path leading from back door to compost bin may look good on paper as you doodle new garden designs inside in the warm. In practice, though, as you dash out into the rain with a load of potato peelings and a suppurating marrow, you will find that the shortest route is the one you will most often use, even if it involves a long jump over the border that you tastefully placed to shield the compost bin from view.

When the right lines have been drawn out for the paths, you need to think about the kinds of surfaces you want them to have. The most sympathetic coverings, in terms of looks and texture, will probably be the ones that also need most care and maintenance. If you do not like weeds, but hate weedkiller with an equal passion, then you had better start learning to love concrete.

Cost as well as taste has a bearing on the kind of materials you use to surface a path. The simplest and cheapest method is to leave them as beaten earth. The disadvantage of this is that you lose contrasts of colour and texture between paths and beds. And the paths get muddy after rain. On the plus side is the cost, which is nothing, and the fact that beaten earth paths can easily be rerouted when you feel like a change in the layout of the garden.

Straw is perhaps too rustic a material to use in a town garden, but in country gardens it treads down quickly to make friendly paths around vegetable plots, and sops up damp as usefully as a sponge. When it begins to look tacky, you rake it up, put it on the compost heap and replace it with a fresh layer.

Ground or chipped bark also needs regular topping up, but gives a dark, rich, chocolate-cake finish to paths, especially informal ones. If you already use composted bark to mulch beds, don't use it on paths as well. You will lose any sense of contrast between one area and another, and your garden will start to look like a demonstration plot for waste products of the timber industry. Lay sheets of black polythene under the bark if you want to cut down on weeding, but not if you like the idea of the bark itself slowly transmuting to soil.

The same general principles apply to gravel, which has the added attraction of sticking to the bottom of your shoes and then magically unsticking as soon as you walk back into the house. But it makes a satisfyingly crunchy noise when you walk on it. So much so that police forces recommend it as a burglar deterrent. Plants seed themselves happily into it. Bulbs such as scillas look charming growing through it. I like this effect, of things spilling from borders into paths. If you don't, put polythene sheeting under the top dressing of gravel.

Gravel has different colours and textures, depending on where it has come from. Some have a pinkish tinge. Others are soberly and almost uniformly grey. I like the ones that are predominantly cream. Stick to one kind, that tones with the colour and texture of the brick or stone of the buildings around you. For a serene, calming, Zen finish, rake the gravel in parallel lines with a wide-tined rake. Gravel can be used to eke out more expensive materials such as stone. Set paving slabs in an open pattern down the length of a path and fill in around them with gravel.

Hoggin is the term for a mixture of sand, gravel and pebbles that was often used in traditional kitchen gardens to provide a firm sur-

# On the right track

Anna Pavord continues her series on gardening principles. This week: devising and keeping paths



Sissinghurst: some patterning of the path materials gives a better effect than total anarchy

PHOTO: NATIONAL TRUST/ERIC CRILTON

face for paths that had to stand up to heavy traffic. It must be properly rolled, so that the constituents bind together to make a hard, durable crust. The best hoggin paths are made with a "batter", a slightly humped profile, so that water is shed from the centre to run along gutters either side.

If as a covering you use bark or gravel, both of which kick about easily, you will probably need edgings for your paths to keep the stuff in place. Lengths of board make simple, unobtrusive edgings, and few skips are without planks that can be recycled like this. Keep them straight by bashing a few wooden pegs into the ground tight against them. Avoid rolls of corrugated plastic edging, which draws attention to itself without having the looks to warrant it.

If your paths are properly paved with stone or brick, you won't need fixed edgings and can rely on intertwined clumps of violas, daisies, alpine strawberries, pinks or petunias to keep

the earth of the borders where it should be. If you mulch beds every year (as you should - make a resolution now) the soil level gradually builds up. Then it is more prone to topple on to the paths. Plants provide better nets for catching it than planks of wood.

Old bricks make good paths if you happen to have them about. They have become extraordinarily expensive to buy. DIY experts start tutting in an irritating way if you use indoor bricks outside. Yes, they do sometimes flake in bad frosts, but they do not disintegrate entirely. I'd prefer to run that risk than live with the liverish, slightly shiny finish of what is called "engineering brick".

Similar to brick, but usually dark grey, dark blue or black, are stable pavours, which are criss-crossed over with an incised trellis pattern to stop horses slipping. It works for humans, too. These slabs make smart paths in minimalist city back yards.

Some of the best paths, such as those at Sissinghurst, the National Trust's famous garden in Kent, are made from a random selection of bricks, cobble and rubble. Some patterning of the materials - using bricks in threes, incorporating roundels made from bits of blue-and-white china, making parallel lines of cobbles down the sides - gives a better effect than total anarchy. The advantage of this kind of path is that it provides a home to all kinds of bits and pieces that you do not want to throw away.

The most unpleasant surface for paths is asphalt, though concrete runs a close second. Asphalt is just a touch more funereal. Laid on an uneven surface, both of them crack and become as lethal as they are ugly. If you have a path like this, abandon all thoughts of repairing it. Invite round a bunch of friends with pickaxes and grievances and let them work off their spleen on the hard core. Then cart it all off to the tip and start again.

**Duff Hart-Davis** There is little doubt that the Welsh hills have suffered the worst damage at the teeth of sheep



**W**hatever other ecological controversies may flare up in 1997, there is certain to be sharp debate about the decline of Britain's heather moors. *Crisis in the Hills*, the report recently published by the Wildlife Trusts, showed how excessive grazing by sheep has impoverished our upland habitat, and called for immediate reforms to arrest the downward trend.

Case studies range from Islay, off the west coast of Scotland, through Cumbria and the Peak District, to Wales. There is little doubt that the Welsh hills have suffered the worst damage at the teeth of sheep; and, according to the report, the main agent of destruction is the present system of subsidies, whereby hill farmers are paid £30 per breeding ewe per year, irrespective of the area on which the animals range.

The result is that sheep are far too numerous, and on many hills the vegetation is being eaten to death. Heather and other dwarf shrubs, such as bilberries, are dying out; wild flowers are vanishing; bracken (which is not only poisonous, but also harbours disease-bearing ticks) is taking over; and birds such as grouse, curlew, golden plover and merlin are disappearing.

The report contends that farmers, instead of being paid to destroy the countryside, should receive financial incentives to improve it. The most important recommendation is that the Government should switch from payments per head to payments per acre.

All this sounds like good sense. Yet many Welsh farmers are infuriated by the report, claiming that it grossly oversimplifies the problems - that, for instance, the decline in bird life is due largely to an increase in predators such as birds of prey, foxes and feral mink. The Wildlife Trusts (the farmers say) should address themselves to this problem, rather than bash away at shepherds.

I myself find it strange that the report makes no mention of the role played by the owners of grouse moors. Because grouse depend on healthy heather, private landowners who wish to run shoots spend fortunes on the active management of their land. Strips of old heather are burned every year to promote constant new growth, bracken is suppressed by cutting or spraying, and the control of predators benefits not only

game but other moorland birds as well.

No debate about the role of grouse-shooting. Grouse were abundant in Wales until the Twenties and Thirties, but now there are extremely few left. Sheep and predators have driven the game-birds out.

It so happens that in the annual competition for wild game conservation projects, organised by the champagne firm Laurent-Perrier, the first two awards this year have gone to estates with large expanses of heather. The winner was Garrobie, a 30,000-acre grouse moor and deer forest south of Loch Ness, whose owner, Charles Connell, has made valiant efforts to restore heather destroyed by overgrazing.

Seldom can there have been a better illustration of what happens to hill country when management lapses. At the turn of the century Garrobie was a highly productive grouse moor, but by the time Mr Connell bought the place in 1979 overstocking had reduced it to a poor sheep farm and an occasional deer forest, with scarcely a grouse to be seen.

Now, by a combination of predator control and habitat management, he has built it back, and last season it yielded 550 brace. His main play has been to exclude sheep from large areas with electric fences, some of them powered by miniature windmills. The improvement of the vegetation within the barriers has been amazing.

Similarly spectacular results have been achieved at Abernethy, on Speyside, where the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has won Laurent Perrier's second prize for the management of its 34,000-acre reserve. There the main aim is to conserve and extend the ancient Caledonian pine forest, principally by reducing the red deer population from nearly 1,000, to 300.

With grazing pressure lifted, pine seedlings are no longer being mown off in infancy. The forest is gradually spreading, and the undergrowth of heather and bilberry has become noticeably more luxuriant. This has helped the population of black grouse - a threatened species - to increase threefold.

From every corner of Britain the message is the same: that heather has astonishing powers of recuperation, and can stage a comeback after lying dormant for 50 years. But an enlightened manager must give it that chance.



## cuttings

**W**inskill Stones, 64 acres of rare limestone pavement in the Yorkshire Dales, have been saved from quarry owners' bulldozers. This follows the massive response to an appeal launched by Plantlife, a charity dedicated to conserving wild plants and their habitats. The appeal was led by television's star gardener, Geoff Hamilton, who died earlier this year. Since then, Plantlife has received thousands of contributions from fans in memory of Mr Hamilton.

The appeal has been so successful that Plantlife had money left over from the sum that it needed to

support the funds pledged by the National Heritage Lottery Fund to buy Winskill Stones. It intends to use the extra to create a wild flower meadow in Mr Hamilton's home county, Rutland.

National Lottery Funds will also be vital to restore Britain's first ever public park, Derby Arboretum, for future generations to enjoy. The arboretum, which lies at the centre of the city, was given to Derby in 1835 by Joseph Strutt, the owner of the local cotton mill. The park was designed and laid out by John Claudius Loudon, the horticulturist

and writer, who was the Geoff Hamilton of the mid-19th century. Many of the original features of Loudon's design still remain, miraculously unaltered.

Strutt laid down few precepts. The arboretum was to be a public garden, open free to two days a week (including Sunday) with a minimum charge on the other five days. Two lodges were to be included, one of which could be used as a public assembly room. Maintenance costs were to be kept as low as possible.

Loudon thought that the site's main disadvantage was its lack of a "distant prospect". There was "no

view beyond the grounds, worthy of being taken" he wrote at the time. His solution was to mould the ground into mounds up to 10 feet high to shut out what he didn't want to see.

At the time, this was a massive innovation and it remains an ideal way of getting round a problem that is rather worse now than it was in Loudon's time.

The City Council has appointed Glenn Anderson, landscape consultants, to find out from those who use the arboretum or live near it, how they feel it could be improved.

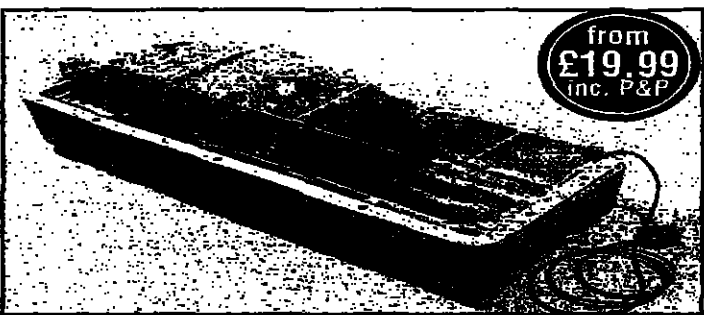
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# If art is where the home is

Jane Farnival unravels the anxiety of buying art

Most of us like the idea of having "proper" pictures on our walls, but the idea of buying them makes us worry about being ripped off or having our taste mocked by people who are artier than thou.

So how do you start buying art? First, don't let the apparent mystique get you down. The simple rules are: follow your heart, think whether you can live with it in your house, don't buy anything damaged and don't buy for investment without doing your homework first.

Art 97, the London Contemporary Art Fair—a show selling work from most main galleries—starts next Wednesday. It is sponsored by this newspaper and is an ideal place to cut your artistic teeth.

The current passion is for narrative scenes which don't flaunt all their charms at once but reveal more each time you look. If you are seeking entertainment pop to the Flowers East Gallery stand to see Patrick Hughes' starting three-dimensional paintings which appear to swirl when you look at them. Sam Taylor-Wood's set of photographs called *Five Revolutionary Seconds* were taken with a panoramic 360 degree camera which presents an all-round view in five seconds (White Cube gallery stand).

If you want artists with track records, there are new portraits by Alison Watt, who painted the controversial Queen Mother-looking-old picture a few years ago, and large pastels by Paula Rego, whose portrait of Germaine Greer hangs in the National Portrait Gallery. For humour, look for the quirky cartoon style of Annora Spence.

Once you have found an interesting picture, you could organise your thoughts by asking yourself, "What did the artist want to tell me that's new about this subject? And is it worth knowing?" Pass quickly by if it isn't.

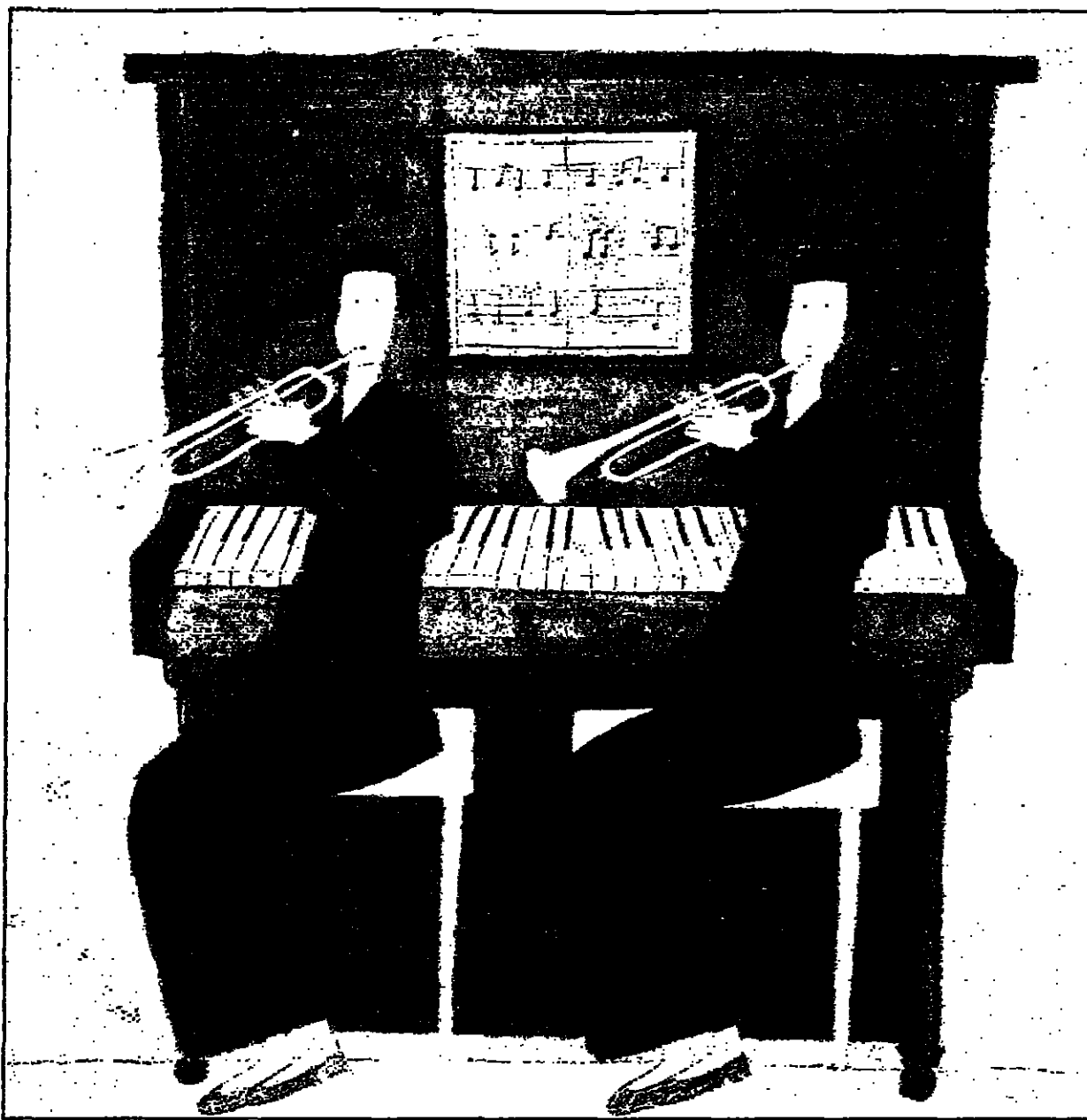
If you are looking for a picture to live with, I'd add: "Is this picture painted with love towards the subject?" That doesn't mean chocolate box flattery. Some pictures exude a sourness of spirit that can affect a room's mood.

Always ask the seller, "What's your best price?" It's a trade secret that many galleries add ten per cent to cover the commission they pay to interior decorators. Prints are the cheapest "Real Art", but be wary because you worry that you might be buying an expensive form of Athena poster.

"You've got to be careful," warns Julian Lowergan of CCA Galleries, which specialises in prints by young artists. "Buy hand-made original prints of editions limited to no more than 250. Eight hundred is too many."

The prints' more expensive cousin, the etching, is printed by the artist from a metal plate, then sometimes hand tinted. Once you've got your picture home, the colour of your walls or proportions of your house may make it look quite different. If you hate it, the best dealers will take it back, but you must move fast.

"The last picture I bought—an etching



'Ladies at the Piano' by Annora Spence

PHOTOGRAPH: CCA GALLERIES

of a pig—was too big for my flat," confesses personal caterer Charlotte Lyon, 34, who collects modern prints of food. "I moved it from room to room until it became an eyesore. I tried to return it to the gallery where I bought it, but I'd had it for a year and the guy wasn't interested."

You could change your wall colour to match your picture, though don't make it too obvious. Interior designer Nina Campbell recalls being taken into a room which had clearly been done up in pale grey to "frame" a Degas. "There was only a cream coloured sofa in the whole room. You had to sit and admire the picture. It's not something I approve of. One shouldn't decorate around one's picture. Pictures should just sort of happen."

Val Lewis, 53, chose her paintings to match her interior. She fell in love with the

lithographs of young German artist Jurgen Gong for their fairytale dream-like quality—and because he uses her favourite wall colours of terracotta and peach.

Six years later, the Lewises have 29 Gong works and have just moved to a bigger house to give them scope for more. She fell for the house when she saw its high hall "because I could immediately see where my prints would go".

Papers and Paints, the Battersea decorating suppliers, report a steady number of customers clutching photos of works of art hoping to find matching wall colour in pure artists' pigment. Top art suppliers Cornelissen point out that many of these pigments are too toxic for walls. Safe ones are any earthy colours, ochre and terracottas, and ultramarine blue—but they cost £65.25 a kilo. If you move house, or change your interior,

change your picture frame. Napoleon changed every frame at the Louvre. Aluminium is out, gilt and painted frames are in. Designer Christine Fallah has just used hand painted salmon pink on a gold frame for three Mick Rooney lithographs of musicians so that "the eye would be attracted to the beautiful frame, as a window leads to the picture".

Frames can make a weak picture seem more important, or a cheap one more valuable but don't be seduced into buying a picture by the frame. And beware: art is addictive.

Art 97, the London Contemporary Art Fair, takes place at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1 from 15th-19th January (0171-339 3333). Wed-Thurs 11am-8.30pm; Fri-Sat 11am-7pm; Sun 11am-5pm.

## Good thing

**Living Colors: The Definitive Guide to Color Palettes Through the Ages**, by Margaret Walsh and Augustine Hope (Chronicle Books) will help you match wall paint to painter. The artistic work is boiled down to its 10 characteristic colours, in swatches to take to the paint shop. £22.99 from Liberty, Regent Street, London W1R 6AH (0171-734 1234).



## Mad thing

Great art should wear well. This red velvet beret trimmed with an exuberant feather—inspired by Frans Hals' *Young Man Holding a Skull* (1626)—is one of six hats by Rachel Skinner based on National Gallery paintings. £95 from the National Gallery Sainsbury Wing Shop, Trafalgar Square, London SW1 (0171-747 2870 for mail order).



## Sure thing

If you don't see a picture you want to buy, why not paint one. Arts psychologist Andy Evans offers practical help with overcoming a creative block in any art form. Take yourself to him with your failed art and he'll make you feel at ease. From £20 per hour (0171-602 2707).

## Six of the best home improvements

You don't have to go mad on decorating, or even buy works of art, to change the feel of a room—just add a touch here and there. Accessories such as rugs and lampshades can make all the difference. The key is not to spend a fortune, and to improvise. Maybe use old maps as wallpaper, or make the most of half-used tins of paint by printing stripes on odd walls. We've come up with six suggestions, one for each room of your house, to make an immediate difference.

### Hall

Yellow mottled wallpaper. £25 a roll, by Designers Guild, 207-271 King's Road, London SW3 (0171-243 7300).



### Front room

Pink acrylic door knob with mini spiral level. £40, from Space, 214 Westbourne Grove, London W11 (0171-229 6533).



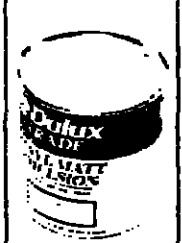
### Dining room

Classic urn stencil. £12.99; stencil stick, £2.99 each, available in 22 colours, all from the Stencil Store, 89 Lower Skene Street, London SW1 and branches nationwide (enquiries and mail order, 01925-285 57788).



### Kitchen

Party Day orange paint. £17.49 for two-and-a-half litres, by Dulux Definitions, available from good home and DIY stores (enquiries, 01753 550555).



### Bedroom

Turquoise silk lampshade with glass bead droplets, £12, from Bhs, 252-258 Oxford Street, London W1 and branches nationwide (enquiries, 0171-262 3288).



### Bathroom

Multicoloured mosaic tiles, £10 per kilo, from Paint Magic, 79 Shepperton Road, London N1 and branches nationwide (enquiries and mail order, 0171-354 9696).



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One of Rover's surviving village-style dealerships, at Hampton in Middlesex. The company is proposing to slim down its network

PHOTOGRAPH: PETER MACDIARMID



Gavin Green

Cars with weak brands are endlessly advertised on TV, all trying to push some invariably mendacious message

Brand is the big motor industry buzz word. Most car makers now have brand managers whose sole job is to work out what the brand should be, and then single-mindedly reinforce it through marketing, advertising and PR.

Yet the majority of car makers have little or no brand identity. The exceptions are Mercedes-Benz (solid, well engineered, expensive), Volvo (safe, but so badly driven you pity every other poor sod on the road), BMW (flash, German, driven by image-conscious thrusters in a hurry), Rolls-Royce (regal, if now a touch vulgar), Jaguar (gentlemanly, mature), Ferrari (sexy, fast) and Porsche (flash, fast). Of the mass makers, only Volkswagen has a consistently strong brand (well-made, won't let you down). These are strong brands because, by and large, they accurately reflect the product and have done so for many years, reinforced by suitable promotion.

Weak brands are those artificially fabricated by some highly paid marketing consultant or ad agency, and then foisted on an ill-informed brand manager, usually to promote a wholly unexceptional car.

Cars with weak brands are those endlessly being advertised on TV, all trying to push some meaningless and invariably mendacious message. Ninety-five per cent of car ads fall into this category.

Despite the intentions of the brand manager and the ad agency, they will usually fail to build a brand because their message bears no relationship with reality. Rover (ex-slogan: "Above all, it's a Rover") has no brand value partly because that slogan was nonsensical. Underneath, Rovers are Hondas. More important, the cars Rover makes today are nothing like the cars it made 20 years ago, when it did have a strong brand (comfortable, strong, genteel). It will take many years for BMW, Rover's new owner, to correct this. And BMW, expert at brand management, knows it.

Vauxhall is another maker with no image - partly because its slogans are silly. How can the Vectra be a car for the next millennium when it's so ordinary in this one? It is also because Vauxhall, as a

car maker, stands for nothing. Its cars have been consistently unexceptional.

One reason for car makers becoming brand obsessed is that as cars become more mechanically similar, so their brand identities become more important as buying differentiators. Nowadays, there is virtually no difference in engineering quality between a Nissan and a Citroën and a Peugeot and a Fiat (or, for that matter, a Renault and a Ford and a Vauxhall). They are virtually mechanical clones. So their badges, and all they stand for, matter more and more.

Even some manufacturers who do genuinely offer distinctive products are moving to the middle ground of mediocrity. They, too, have to reduce costs and now borrow manufacturing methods and components used by their less distinctive but frequently more cost-efficient rivals. Mercedes cars, although still the world's best built, are not as exceptionally solid as they were a decade or so ago, because they are increasingly being manufactured like Fords and Renaults and Nissans. The latest and finest VW Polo, although still better made than any rival, is not as tough as an old Golf.

In terms of product, the biggest difference between cars is now in their style. A few distinctive shapes are starting to pepper the roads after years of same-old styling - notably from Fiat, Ford, Audi and Renault. Good car designers are now being lauded like the fashion couture kings. Like clothes designers, they are asked to put sex appeal and emotion into goods which, materially, are much the same as the rivals.

When people at parties find out what I do, they invariably ask me what sort of car they should buy. Years ago, when cars were more mechanically distinctive, I would answer their questions at length. Now, I simply ask which car they fancy (which is invariably a car that appeals - usually on the basis of style and brand). As long as there is a dealer close by, as long as it is not East European, Korean or Malaysian (although new Skodas and new Hyundais are fine) whose cars really are still technologically a decade behind, then I advise them to buy it. They are rarely disappointed.

## Where have all the dealers gone?

... to huge retail parks, as James Ruppert finds out

Station Garage, at Topsham, near Exeter, recently ceased to be a Skoda dealer. "After 25 years, it came as a bit of a blow," says the former proprietor, Mike Commis. "Selling Skodas was never easy, but it was a way of life for us. Skoda did everything by the book when it came to termination, but it was just a bit heavy-handed."

Station Garage is not alone. It is one of many Skoda dealers being pruned from the nationwide network. This is part of a trend sweeping through the motor industry as manufacturers seek to exercise more control over the way their cars are sold. What it all boils down to is that your local dealer may not be so local in the near future. Servicing parts and sales are increasingly becoming a regional phenomenon. For rural motorists in particular, popping down to a small, friendly, local outlet a few miles away is proving increasingly difficult. Manufacturers want you to visit a huge, impersonal, business park site.

In Yorkshire, for instance, the number of Volvo dealers is just three, catering for one huge territory, whilst Rover has expressed its intention to cull up to 30 per cent - around 160 sites - of its existing 511 dealers. According to the motor industry analysts Sewells, UK car dealership numbers as a whole will drop by as much as 40 per cent over the next 10 years. The signs are that car makers are expanding the territories of larger

dealers at the expense of smaller ones. Remember the corner shop? Replaced by the big, bland, corporate supermarket. Something similar is happening in the motor trade.

Once upon a time there was an Austin Morris dealership down every high street. It explained the big sales and huge loyalty enjoyed by the home marque, but during the rationalised British Leyland era, the small outlets were cut back. "That's what happened to this site 25 years ago," says Mike Commis. "So we decided to sell Skodas ... now the same thing has happened again, and this time we are striking out on our own."

When it comes to innovative ways of marketing cars, the Daewoo has been remarkably successful - making much of the fact that they are cutting out the dealer completely and are selling direct to the customer. In the first year of trading the company sold 18,000 cars in the UK, and has taken around a 1 per cent share of the new car market.

Meanwhile, Kevin Jones at Rover does not see a problem with his company's proposals to slim down the network. "This is not a cut-and-slash policy, but a businesslike approach that will ensure the network's future. Essentially every dealer has to justify his or her existence, and clearly one that is not selling a good mix of cars, or operating profitably, won't survive. Take the specialist MG, for instance: we appointed just 125 dealers to sell that marque because it would not

have been viable for all 500 to have sold a sports car. We would like nothing more than a Rover dealer in every town, but that is not possible in today's environment. However, as cars are less dependent on servicing, it makes sense to concentrate our activities over a wider area."

Dealers are fighting back. A highly publicised case last July involved Harry Wake, a Lincoln Renault dealer, who had his franchise cancelled when Renault UK said the premises were inadequate and wanted them replaced by a green field site run by another dealer. The judge ruled in favour of Mr Wake, who can now trade until 2002 as a Renault dealer, because there was a verbal agreement between the parties after Mr Wake rescued the company and invested £75,000. The judge saw Renault UK's actions of backing out of an agreement not to terminate so long as Wake was in charge as "deeply unattractive ... making a mockery of the manufacturer's fine words about partnership with its dealers".

However, this ruling does not alter a manufacturer's right to dump a dealer without notice, even though copycat cases to test the legal precedent set by the case were threatened. It all turned on the existence of a verbal assurance which was construed (backed up by Renault UK's internal documents) as a binding contract. Clearly, manufacturers will have to be careful what they say to dealers. A sales manager told me: "their guys

from head office were quite open; they want to put dealers on huge retail parks. They argued that customers flock to the out-of-town superstores, such as MFI. But I argued they don't all need to take their flat-packed furniture back to be serviced, do they?"

Prime movers behind the big-ist best movement were the multiple dealer groups, which account for 50 per cent of the UK car trade. However, the biggest of all, Lex Retail, maintains that a leaner operation is a more efficient and profitable one. According to Malcolm Harbour of Solihull-based motor industry analysts Harbour Wade Brown, "large dealer groups may identify new opportunities by concentrating their efforts in market niches, or by developing a strong regional base."

One of the most remarkable indications that this is happening is the announcement that the Chesterfield-based Pendragon Group has been awarded the Fiat and Alfa Romeo franchises for the entire territory within the M25, an area that accounts for 10 per cent of Fiat Group sales. This two-year scheme will see Pendragon develop 15 retail sites with three more after-sales service centres. Fiat's Peter Newton refuted the suggestion that this amounted to a cartel. "This enlarged territory approach is not a strategy that will be applied countrywide. It suits the metropolitan area, provides economies of scale and will result in better customer service.

Overall we operate and believe in a balanced network with everything from small, family-run outlets to public companies."

In theory you can shop around for your next car, but all dealers operate on a postcode basis and are supposed to draw their customers from that area. BMW and Porsche franchises are just two of the more strict prestige marques who could refuse to sell you a car if your postcode does not fit. But should you be forced to buy from a dealer you don't like, or who offers the worst buying package?

There are signs that some dealers are turning away from the franchise system and becoming masters of their own destiny. Inverness dealer Norman Cordner recently sold their Ford franchise to become a nearly-new car specialist. They have turned their three-acre site into a "Motor Mall", and they are combining it with a fast fit, service, accident repair and rental operations. "We felt that as a family firm we should become fully independent to expand down our chosen route," a representative remarked.

At newly independent Station Garage, Mike Commis was relieved. "You can't make a small franchise pay these days: the margins are tiny and then there are all the costs of signage and promotion. Sometimes the Skoda sign put customers off. Our used-car operation is thriving. Breaking away from the franchise system has given us a new lease of life."

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## The rebirth of Docklands

Catherine Wheatley reports on a recovery

**B**ack in the Eighties the Docklands area of east London was heralded as the ultimate yuppie neighbourhood. Yet by the early Nineties the notion had fallen flat. Who wanted to live in a glass-and-steel tower, symbol of all that was brash about the last decade, miles from the nearest shops and restaurants, and isolated by a notoriously unreliable transport system?

Docklands has always aroused strong emotions. When Canary Wharf rose out of the marshes, developers celebrated the birth of a new community. And when the owners, Olympia & York, went bust, the same people furiously blamed poor infrastructure.

But reports of the death of Docklands may have been exaggerated. A new, more rational attitude is emerging, as buyers recognise that the area is good value for money. Estate agents find that demand among City workers and professionals has risen sharply. According to the regeneration agency London Docklands Development Corporation, sales of flats and houses on the Isle of Dogs last year were up 140 per cent on 1995.

Hazel Ankesmit, a personnel administrator working in London's Mayfair, is typical of the new generation of buyers in E14. Tired of a daily commute from Hove, East Sussex, she is paying £110,000 for a one-bedroom flat in Burrell's Wharf, through estate agent Knight Frank.

"I don't want to be in the smoky parts of London and I certainly don't want to live in a conventional road in Wandsworth. I think Docklands is good value. I'm getting security, easy parking and a river view - very important, as I'm a Pisces," she laughs.

The Jubilee Line extension from Green Park via Canary Wharf to Stratford is playing a pivotal role in the renaissance. At the moment the journey from the Isle of Dogs to the West End takes about three-quarters of an hour using the Docklands Light Railway. The new link, scheduled to open in March 1998, should cut commuting time to just 14 minutes.

Although Hazel Ankesmit is used to a long haul to work, the Underground line was a big factor in her choice of new home. "The bus service is all right and I think the DLR is fun, but Jubilee Line is really going to help. Also, shops and restaurants are going to pop up around the station," she adds.

Canary Wharf station will be next door to West India Quay, a proposed retail and

leisure complex which will eventually include a supermarket, a multiplex cinema, a hotel, and around 20 restaurants and shops. The developers will also convert the beautiful Grade I listed West India Quay warehouses into 90 apartments. At Canary Wharf itself, the Riverside scheme planned by a Hong Kong entrepreneur will feature a sports and leisure centre, another hotel and possibly a casino, as well as 330 flats.

The projects, due to be completed by the end of next year, should finally crush the criticism that there are no facilities on the Isle of Dogs. Two years ago, unless locals were shopping for a new suit or a Filofax, a trip off the island was essential. But since then there has been a steady increase in the number and range of retailers. Now, residents can get their groceries at Tesco Metro and pop into Books Etc or Music Music before having lunch at Café Rouge or All Bar One.

Much of the improvement is due to more businesses relocating to E14: demand for offices is reinforcing demand for shops and housing. According to Rupert Cherryman, of estate agent Chesterton, Citibank's decision last August to pick Canary Wharf as the preferred site for its new UK headquarters will make a crucial difference.

"What's happening at Canary Wharf has generated a lot of interest," he says. "There is a feeling among home-buyers that Docklands is coming of age."

With all the renewed interest in Docklands, buying here is not necessarily easy. Simon O'Donnell, a management accountant, was gazumped last October when he tried to buy a house for £94,500 in the Quay West development. "I've just paid the full asking price for my new place in Jamestown Harbour," he says. "But I still think it's a good deal. I've lived here for six years and I really enjoy it. Docklands is not as far away as people think."

Prices have already gone up by between 5 and 10 per cent, even though purpose-built developments and a handful of office-to-residential conversions will put more than 800 new homes on the Isle of Dogs this year. A repeat of last February's IRA bomb attack is another worry. But Simon O'Donnell, like many other buyers, is unperturbed. "I looked at properties in Greenwich and in Blackheath, but there was really nothing to compare with the Isle of Dogs. You get more for your money here."



Gazumped when trying to buy in Docklands last autumn, Simon O'Donnell has recently bought a home in Jamestown Harbour

PHOTO: PHILIP MEECH

## Mortgages and the endowment policy pay-out risk

The news on payouts is encouraging but the risk has not been eliminated yet. By Clifford German

**F**ears that many thousands of homeowners who were persuaded during the Eighties to take out endowment policies to repay their mortgages would not receive enough to pay the mortgage off in full have "probably" been exaggerated, but it may need another four years of profitable investment conditions before the risk disappears.

The latest evidence to support this conclusion comes from the new figures announced every January by the insurance companies which provide endowment policies. At this time each year they declare the payouts on policies which will mature during the year and the new bonus figures which are added each year to the basic value of all current policies.

Payouts are based on the investment

returns fund managers can achieve on the premiums received over the life of the policy, and consist of three elements, the basic sum assured, annual or "reversionary" bonuses credited each year during the life of the policy, and a single "terminal" bonus added during the final year.

Endowment policies taken out in the Seventies and early Eighties are not at risk. A man who took out a Norwich Union endowment policy in 1972 aged 30 and paid £50 a month over 25 years would be in line for a payout of £93,179 this year, slightly more than the equivalent payout of £92,535 a year ago. This represents a cumulative annual return of 12.6 per cent a year which compares with an average inflation rate of 8.4 per cent over the period, and implies substantial windfall

profits for the policy-holder well in excess of what is needed to pay off the mortgage.

But very few endowment mortgages were taken out in the Seventies. It was not until the Eighties when lenders got wise to the commissions they could earn from insurance companies by getting borrowers to take out an endowment policy to repay the loan in one fell swoop that endowments became the normal way of repayment. Many existing borrowers were also persuaded to swap their regular repayment mortgages for an endowment, which means most policies maturing in the Nineties will only have been running for periods of between 10 and 15 years, not 25.

Unfortunately for endowment policy holders it was also the time when the government began to get inflation under con-

trol and the rates of return insurance companies could earn also starting falling. So the same borrower who started paying £50 a month in 1987 will be getting only £9,765 back this year, an annual return of 9.4 per cent against an average inflation rate of 4.5 per cent. In real terms after inflation, returns have been well maintained, but an endowment policy-holder with a set mortgage to repay is, of course, interested in the total return not the real return after inflation.

The new bonus figures appearing show that payouts on endowment policies maturing in 1997 will also be as much as 5 per cent less than an equivalent policy maturing last year received. Few maturing policies will actually fail to cover the mortgage, but the surplus after paying off

the mortgage will now be a modest 10-20 per cent rather than the substantial windfalls a full-term 25-year policy pays out.

Future payouts depend on the annual bonuses credited to endowment policies and especially the terminal bonuses added in the final year. The longer the policy runs the larger the value of the bonuses and especially the terminal bonus, which can be 10-30 per cent of the payout after 10 years, and 40-60 per cent after 25 years.

At General Accident, for example, the sum assured is 52 per cent of the payout on a 10-year endowment policy maturing this year, the annual bonuses are 31 per cent and the terminal bonus just 17 per cent. After 25 years the sum assured represents just 12 per cent, the annual bonuses 33 per cent and the terminal

bonus 55 per cent of the payout, which is why it is best to hang on to policies and not surrender them.

So what are the prospects for the future? The reduced payout on a 10-year policy maturing this year is because the good returns in 1996 were offset by better returns in 1986, the year which has dropped out of the latest calculations; 1987 was not a good year (although less of a disaster than memories of the Great Crash in October would suggest) so it ought to be easy for 1997 to beat it in time for next year's figures. But 1988 and especially 1989 were good years so the pressure will stay on 10-year maturities for another four years, when the negative returns on investments in 1990 will drop out of the equation.

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# Moving the goal posts

Where rugby players are renting. By Rosalind Russell

**T**hey're built like Desperate Dan, have thighs like tree-trunks and are usually covered in mud. If they sat on a dainty, chintz-covered sofa, it might groan in protest. But landlords love them.

Since Rugby Union turned professional this season and began to pay its players – previously strictly amateur – teams in the south have begun importing players from the northern professional League sides. As most come just for the season, there's no point in buying a house, so they are renting. And paying handsomely.

"The relocation of rugby players is big business for us," says Sophie Emerick, of estate agent Chestertons in Barnes. "It will be even bigger next year as more Rugby League players will be loaned from their union clubs."

Other estate agents are in a scrum to cash in. Many of their staff are involved in the game; the former England player Rob Andrew was a chartered surveyor with a top estate agency. Such employers allow time off for training because it's good for the company's profile.

Some London clubs, such as the Wasps, Saracens, Harlequins and Richmond, have had to find homes for their visiting players. All of which is music to the ears of property owners in the favoured areas. A one-bedroom flat near the club can command £200 a week; two-bedroom homes £350 and three-bedroom houses up to £500 a week.

Before, it was just lucky owners near Wimbledon's lawn tennis club who bagged sports stars in need of a billet. Some paid their children's school fees, or flew off to Barbados on the proceeds. Now Barnes, Richmond and Twickenham are reaping the benefit of the collapse of the barrier between League and Union rugby. It's been likened to the demolition of the Berlin Wall.

Andy Challis, first team manager of NEC Harlequins, says: "As Rugby League now plays during the summer, the players can play for a union side until about February. Of course, they need somewhere to live, so we try to help as they don't know the area. I have been talking to estate agents and looking at houses. We like to put them in properties of a reasonable standard."

Harlequins has two League players currently on loan: New Zealander Robbie Paul. Rugby League player of the year, lent by Leeds; and Gary Connolly from Wigan.

Connolly had only five days to find a home before playing his debut match for the Harlequins. A bachelor, and happy to let Andy Challis make the choice, he found himself in a pretty little mews house in Barnes. Robbie Paul, with a girlfriend and two small children, viewed a few houses before choosing a three-bedroom house in Strawberry Hill, Twickenham.

"We are based at Twickenham, so Barnes is good as it's only about five miles away, and is also near to the Riverside Club in Chiswick where Gary trains," says Challis.

The players coming down from the north have been taken aback by the cost of renting.

"I couldn't believe the cost," says Antonia Seaton, Robbie's girlfriend. "The house we are staying in now would cost about £400 a month in Bradford. Down here it's about four times that much. You pay £1,500 a month for a little box. In this area, which is good, middle class, it's as good as you get. It's quite nice, but I have to admit we were shocked."

In Bradford, the couple own a three-bedroom semi. "Up there, you could have rented half a castle with eight bedrooms for £500," adds Antonia.

Prices in the south were not such a surprise to Philippe Sella, the French rugby player currently turning out for the north London club Saracens. He and his family are renting a spacious flat overlooking Regent's Park, where charges are commonly £1,000 a week. Or to Australian Michael Lynagh, also playing for Saracens and renting in Hampstead. Fellow Australian David Campesie is also reported ready to sign up to Saracens.

It could prove harder to persuade sportsmen and their families to relocate up north, though prices are much lower there. Footballers have had more experience in the relocation game. In 1966, when England won the World Cup, there were only 10 foreign players in the British league. Now there are more than 100. All the top London clubs have foreign players: West Ham has six, Chelsea has three Italians and a Dutchman.

But even the Brazilian, Emerson – signed to play for Middlesbrough for £4m – had to take his homesick fiancée Andrea da Silva back to Brazil when she declared she couldn't cope with the North-east. "I was cold and I cried all night," she said. "I felt it was a strange, terrible place. I hope I never have to return."



Importing players: Saracens has currently acquired Australian Michael Lynagh (top) who is renting in Hampstead (above)

PHOTOGRAPHS: TOP, ALL SPORT: ABOVE, PHILIP MEECH

## Who pays for the pollution?

Stella Bingham reports

**F**our years ago, banker David Price and his wife Sandra paid £157,000 for their detached house on a new estate at Copford, near Colchester. Today they would be lucky to sell it for half that price. The houses were built on or near an old rubbish tip which is leaking potentially lethal methane gas. To add insult to injury, the Prices have been told they may have to pay to clean up the contaminated land.

Under the Environment Act 1995, local authorities will be responsible for identifying such land, assessing the risk and getting it cleaned up. The polluter is supposed to pay. Where the polluter cannot be traced, the duty and cost fall on the owner or occupier.

"There are three principal sources of contamination," says Philip Wilbourn, of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. "Some occurs naturally, such as radon gas in Cornwall. There are the historic industries, such as coal and ship-building. Then there are modern industries, such as chemicals. We use land differently from the way we did 100 years ago. We have acid rain now, but we don't pollute rivers with coal tar."

In theory, contamination can kill. "You could be asphyxiated by carbon dioxide. Methane gas from a landfill site can explode. Contamination may cause genetic defects, though there is no conclusive proof of this."

Hundreds of thousands of homes have been built on former industrial, mining and landfill sites. Government policy means that 60 per cent of future homes will be built on "brownfield" sites. Professionally reclaimed, such sites should be perfectly safe. But the problem could go back hundreds of years. "Nobody would dig up the plague pit in Green Park, because smallpox and plague spores survive in perpetuity," says Mr Wilbourn.

"You could buy land and find that because of health and safety issues it's worthless," says Archie Read, of Knight Frank's rural consultancy department. "Local authorities should be able to point you in the direction of possible problems. Solicitors should ask about contamination

in the pre-contract inquiries. Ask the vendors if they are aware of any problems. Talk to older local residents about previous uses of the site. If you are still worried, it might be worth getting an expert to check." Do not rely on the building society survey. A land quality statement from a chartered surveyor costs between £200 and £500.

The National House-Building Council's 10-year warranty offers some protection against hazards and major damage caused to a new home by contaminants. The NHBC still advises buyers to ensure that their solicitors double-check with the builders and the local council. But such advance inquiries will not protect you if you find yourself owning contaminated land.

"The planning process must be strengthened to protect the man in the street," says Mr Wilbourn. "At the moment he is very vulnerable." The mere fear of contamination can blight property. Many houses on the Copford estate are almost unsaleable, though they are not directly affected by the leaking gas. The House of Commons Environment Committee recently recommended that local authorities should keep a public register of contaminated land which had been successfully treated. This should offer some reassurance in the future. They also advised the Department of the Environment to set a one-year deadline for local authorities to inspect contaminated land that may present a significant risk.

Concern has been expressed that areas identified as contaminated might be red-lined by lenders. Sue Anderson, of the Council of Mortgage Lenders, denies this, and Philip Wilbourn is also reassuring. "Local authorities must seek out contaminated land... but they do not need to have all land cleaned up."

He tells the story of a delegate who reported to a conference that the Lake District was contaminated with lead. Asked who was responsible, "she said that since the lead was 12cm deep and had been there for millions of years, the appropriate person was probably God."

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# Help me out of this trap

Adviser Bryan Fisher considers a reader's double-edged problem

**Q:** In the light of current press speculation over plans to run down the state earnings related pension scheme (Serps) I began considering my own position.

My problem is twofold – negative equity and inadequate pension provision. At 41 I am anxious to get my financial situation sorted. The pension I currently have has been in place for four years, I contribute £50 per month to it and I have contracted out of Serps.

In addition, my flat has negative equity of around £17,000. I have a personal loan taken out to cover the cost of recent refurbishment and now on top of this the freeholder has advised that all tenants must pay around £3,000 to cover the cost of general maintenance.

My flat is currently valued at around £39,000. I am concerned that the flat won't appreciate sufficiently to justify me hanging on to it, but I am trapped. I cannot see a way out given my negative equity, current and projected outgoings and inadequate pension provision. Can you help?

**A:** I believe you have every reason to be concerned about the future of Serps. In principle it was a good idea. However, because

of escalating costs it is unlikely to be sustained for ever.

You have contracted out of Serps which, I assume from the information given, was four years ago when you took out the personal pension, which appears to be the right decision. Contracting out is not a once in a lifetime decision, however. As with most financial planning matters it will require reviewing regularly.

Now is the best time to increase your pension contributions. With 19 years to go until your 60th birthday the compound growth on your early contributions will be far more valuable than the growth can possibly be on the last few years' premiums. It is therefore essential that you attempt to maximise the level of your investment as soon as you can. Whether this investment is into your existing plan or another is impossible to advise on without analysing the particulars of your present policy.

At the age of 41 you are allowed to contribute 20 per cent of your income into a Personal Pension Plan and receive tax relief at your highest rate payable. For example, on a salary of £25,000 per annum your maximum gross investment would be £5,000 per annum or £416.66 monthly. As an employee you will receive basic

rate tax relief and the "net cost" to you would be £316.66, in the current tax year. Your current investment of £50 per month equates to an investment of just 2.4 per cent of your salary which, even with strong investment performance, is unlikely to provide you with the level of retirement income you would want.

On the property front I do not think you should be too concerned about the negative equity in your flat. Property prices are rising faster than at any time since the peak of 1989, with London and the South-east leading the way.

I would be concerned by the "general maintenance" bill you are likely to receive. You do not mention what advice you have already taken on this, but I would strongly suggest before entering with any money that the tenants collectively seek legal advice.

You may wish to consider the possibility of switching to an existing interest-only mortgage at one. This will then mean that a monthly payment pays off capital which I have the effect of reducing your negative equity with every payment you make. The only problem may be whether the building society will allow this. Currently they will

have a legal charge on the property and the endowment policy you have.

You will need to obtain a surrender value for your endowment from the insurance company. As you have negative equity the building society may wish to reduce the outstanding balance with this surrender money. Therefore you will need to ask the Building Society first of all whether this switch is possible and secondly check the monthly cost to make sure the repayments are not excessively expensive. This will depend on several factors such as the outstanding term of the mortgage which was not given.

Overall, according to your income/expenditure analysis you appear to have surplus funds which, if the appropriate steps are taken over the next few years, should put you into a much stronger position financially.

Bryan Fisher is an independent financial adviser and the financial planning manager at Berkeley Financial Planning in Coventry. Readers are invited to write to him at The Independent, Letters should not exceed 250 words. The advice is for guidance only and no action should be taken without receiving specific and professional advice.

## Give to charity but keep your options open

Clifford German examines new schemes that allow more flexibility in donating money

**M**any people would like to give money to charity but are worried about possibly finding themselves short of income and capital to meet their own financial needs.

In an attempt to meet this genuine worry the Charities Insurance Association has devised a new method of giving which allows donors the opportunity of drawing a tax-free income of 5 per cent for their own use, and if they do need to do so they can reclaim the capital in full.

Readers who would like a free information pack should call 01622 606355. The new plan is called Legacy Enhancement and the bequest is invested in a with-profits invest-

ment bond managed by Legal & General.

The investor can draw 5 per cent from the bond tax-free, while the charity can keep the remaining income and also knows it has a likely future bequest which helps it plan its own future finances. Investors can, however, elect to leave all the income to roll-up in the fund and increase the future value of the bequest.

A third option allows the investor to draw the income and then covenant it to the charity, a fourth alternative allows the investor to use the income to buy a life assurance policy which can be assigned to the charity and increases the eventual pay-out when the donor eventually dies.

Exactly how much depends on the donor's age and life expectancy, but a 65-year-old woman could more than double the value of the original bequest.

Investors can also make monthly contributions to buy a life assurance policy out of income without actually committing a lump sum at all.

New ways of encouraging bequests to charities are more necessary than ever because the calls on their resources continue to increase while all but a handful of high profile charities have seen their annual incomes shrink in the last two years because potential givers think the National Lottery is looking after them.

In fact most charities are net losers from the lottery, and urgently need to tap streams of cash and concern.

Charities do have tax-exempt status, which means they do not pay income tax on the income they generate and they can claim tax rebates on gifts which individuals have made out of taxed income provided the donors sign a covenant to make annual donations for five consecutive years.

So if a top-rate taxpayer pays £60 a year into the scheme, the charity gets £40 from the taxman.

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Photograph: Andrew Buurman

## So we signed over our home to the bank

As orders flooded in, two knitwear entrepreneurs chose the wrong way to raise funds

### My biggest mistake

Patrick and Jane Gontelien, both 45, are partners in the Artwork knitwear brand, with outlets such as Harvey Nichols, Fenwick, Liberty and Whistles. They met as post-graduates at the Central School of Art in 1975. Their knitwear is now sold in 15 countries including the US and Japan, and as design consultants their clients include Marks & Spencer, Shanghai Tang and Dewhurst Lurie.

"Jane and I started our own business largely because we were unemployed. Neither of us were corporation people, though we did try having proper jobs. After college, Jane joined the BBC's costume department while I went to work for Marks & Spencer, but within 18 months we realised that we'd only be happy working for ourselves.

Our big break came in 1977 when one of our customers asked if we could turn our hands to producing original sweaters by updating the traditional Fair Isle design. That led to orders from the fledgling fashion chain Whistles and from Macy's in New York.

The only problem was that we didn't have any money; we were living from hand to mouth. We could afford to buy the yarn for couple of dozen sweaters, but with serious orders coming in we had a cash-flow crisis. By this time we were living in a house in

London's East End which we had managed to acquire for the princely sum of £8,250. It needed a lot of renovation, but we managed to get a grant to do it up. Around the same time we exhibited at our first trade fair, which was in New York. We were realistic about what we could take on in terms of production, and by lunchtime on the first day we had so many orders that we were forced to close our books. We felt that we'd already bitten off more than we could chew; somehow we had to find a way of raising enough money to buy the yarn and pay the knitters.

Our bank manager, we thought at the time, was great. He said words to the effect of: 'You've got a house... property's doing really well... sign this bit of paper and we'll give you an overdraft.' But in reality, that overdraft was not based on the size of our order book, the quality of our customers, our ability to manage the business or to manufacture the goods. It was based solely on his belief that there was good equity in our home. We made our first mistake at that trade

fair. If we had only kept our order book open for the full three days we probably could have got enough customers to pay in advance to finance all of the production costs. We wouldn't have needed to sign our house over to the bank, which, of course, was our biggest mistake.

Our business grew rapidly throughout the Eighties, and since property prices continued to rise, we always had enough collateral to fund our increasing costs. We had great press coverage, we sold to the best shops throughout the world, our turnover was getting bigger every year and we were able to earn a living.

Profit, as a separate entity, was not something that we had ever considered to be a requirement, and nor did the bank. But in 1990, property prices plunged and our bank

like many others, panicked. The manager responded by transferring two thirds of our overdraft to a short-term loan. 'Restructuring your finances' was the euphemism used. Ironically, our order book was still booming and we appeared to be doing incredibly well. We felt he had found a way of being able to help us finance the production costs. Looking back, I don't think it's possible to be more naive.

In reality it meant that suddenly we were committed to enormous monthly repay-

ments. We kept thinking we had the money to pay the bills, but we didn't, because it had already been deducted by the bank. And we weren't generating enough profit to finance that sort of drain on our working capital.

We didn't just owe money to the bank; we'd built a business with a turnover of £1.5m which employed 1,200 knitters and we owed money to them as well. Our order book, which represented our income for the next six months, was nowhere near what we needed, and we were forced to call in the receivers with the result that we lost our home.

These days we stick to what we're good at, which is designing. We don't attempt to finance the production costs; we have a trade finance company for that, using the customers' orders as collateral. Next year our turnover will be more than £1m again, and, while we still don't have our own home, at least the knitters have been paid what they were owed.

The most important lesson is you should never, under any circumstances, put your house up as equity to raise money for your business. If anyone advises you to do it, sack them, because if the business is sound, there are options that don't involve risking your home."

Patrick and Jane Gontelien were talking to Corinne Sinecock.

## Deciphering pensions

By Clifford German

Pension providers are gradually making themselves more user-friendly, but altogether too slowly. The second annual report of the Personal Investment Authority this week condemns many of the traditional providers for failing to reduce the charges they levy on personal pensions. A handful have reduced their charges in the last two years, but they are mostly companies whose performance has been exposed as sub-standard and who are not attracting the share of new business they need.

But they are being matched by a number of successful performers who have taken advantage of better disclosure of rivals' charges to raise their own towards the industry average. Some providers are also refusing to cut charges on pensions sold through low-cost outlets.

Although pension providers have, by and large, complied with the requirements to publish their charges and to show how much charges will reduce the value of a pension fund over 20 or 30 years (the figures will make your hair curl), they are still wrapping the true meaning up in concepts that the average punter does not understand. "Reduction in yield", for example, is the jargon word for the percentage by which the fund's value is reduced by charges over its lifetime, but the concept is rarely explained to the layman.

In any case, the reduction is less important than the actual yield before and after charges, and that can only be illustrated by guesstimates of a constant increase, conventionally 6, 9 and 12 per cent a year in the value of the fund.

But that does not mean that no progress is being made. Eagle Star this week started selling no-frills, low-cost personal pension plans by telephone in direct competition with Virgin

Direct and Scottish Widows. The premiums are invested in full with no deductions, there are no initial charges, the management charges are just £2 a month plus 1 per cent of the fund, and unlike Virgin the funds are actively managed. But Eagle Star's unique selling point is the promise to refund all fees and charges in full and to transfer the current value of the fund in full if investors become dissatisfied during two years.

Edinburgh-based fund manager Ivory & Sime has launched a pension scheme investing in investment trusts and marketed exclusively through independent financial advisers. Contributions to pensions based on investment trusts are invested in full instead of being subjected to the bid/offer spreads which discourage many people from investing in unit trust-based pension funds. Investors who take out an I&S pension will pay their advisers for advice but they can negotiate commission rebates. The plan will offer flexibility to raise or lower contributions, take contribution breaks or take early retirement, all without penalties.

Abbey Life has also made a gesture towards improved information for potential buyers, aimed at the 30 per cent of the working population who have no private pension plans and the 35 per cent who contribute £50 a month or less. Almost half the population thinks £50 a month would buy a 30-year-old an adequate pension, against a true figure of £250 a month. Abbey Life is offering the first 500 Independent readers who apply a free computer disk or a ready reckoner for those who have no computer, which will show them how much they need to set aside. Call Abbey Life on 0800 202040 and specify disk or ready reckoner.

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Telephone	% Rate and period	Max adv %	Incentive	Redemption penalty
<b>MORTGAGES</b>				
<b>Fixed rates</b>				
Scarborough BS 0800 590547	0.95 for 1 year	85	0.75% —	1st 5 yrs: 6.03% of sum repaid
Coventry BS 0800 126125	4.90 to 1/1/99	85	£250 —	To 1/1/02: 6 mths interest
Bristol & West BS 0800 119955	6.99 to 1/1/01	90	£275 —	To 31/12/01: 6 mths interest
<b>Variable rates</b>				
Scarborough BS 0800 590547	0.75% for 1 year	90	— —	1st 5 yrs: 6.49% of sum repaid
Coventry BS 0800 126125	4.06% for 2 years	85	— —	1st 5 yrs: 6 mths interest
West Bromwich BS 0121 525 7070	5.10% for 3 years	75	— 1% adv rebated	1st 6 yrs: 6% of advance
<b>First time buyers fixed rates</b>				
Lambeth BS 0800 225221	5.20 to 1/3/99	95	295 —	1st 5 yrs: 6 mths interest
Bristol & West BS 0800 119955	6.49 to 1/1/00	90	£275 —	To 31/12/01: 6 mths interest
Northern Rock BS 0800 591500	7.49 to 1/3/02	95	£395 —	1st 6 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
<b>First time buyers variable rates</b>				
Staffordshire BS 01902 317317	2.23 to 1/3/98	90	— —	1st 5 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Greenwich BS 0181 858 8212	4.19% for 2 years	95	— —	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed
Northern Rock BS 0800 591500	5.74% to 1/3/02	95	£295 Refund val fee	1st 7 yrs: 5% of sum repaid

Telephone	APR %	Max LTV	Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years)
<b>Unsecured</b>			
Northern Rock BS 0345 421421	12.9H	—	£112.66
Royal Bank of Scotland 0800 121125	14.0	—	£114.78
Nationwide BS via local branch	14.9	—	£113.15
<b>Secured (second charge)</b>			
Clydesdale Bank 0800 240024	7.8	Neg	£3K - £15K
Royal Bank of Scotland 0131 523 7023	9.0	70%	£2.5K-£100K
Midland Bank 0800 494999	10.1	90%	£5K-neg

Telephone	Account	% pm APR	% pm APR
<b>OVERDRAFTS</b>			
Woolwich BS 0800 400900	Current	0.84	10.5
Alliance & Leicester 0500 959595	Alliance	0.76	9.5
Bank of Scotland 0800 805805	Direct Cheque	—	11.0

Telephone	Card Type	Min Income	Rate % pm	APR %	Annual Fee	Int. free period
<b>CREDIT CARDS</b>						
<b>Standard</b>						
Co-operative Bank 0800 109000	Advantage Visa	—	0.64N	7.90N	nil	0 days
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	—	0.797N	9.90N	nil	54 days
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	Mastercard/Visa	—	0.9167	11.50	nil	0 days
<b>Gold cards</b>						
Co-operative Bank 0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.50	10.50	£120	46 days
RBS Advantage 0800 077770	Visa	£20,000	0.94N	11.90N	nil	56 days
Royal Bank of Scotland 01702 362890	Visa	£20,000	1.05N	14.50N	£35	46 days

Telephone	Payment by direct debit	Payment by other methods
<b>STORE CARDS</b>		
John Lewis via store	1.39 18.0	1.39 18.0
Marks and Spencer 01244 681881	1.87 24.8	1.97 26.3
Sears via store	1.94 25.9	2.20 29.8

APR: Annualised percentage rate. B - C Buildings and Contents Insurance LTV: Loan to value. ASU: Accident, sickness and unemployment. E: Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years. H: Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged. I: Introductory rate for a limited period.

All rates subject to change without notice.

Source: MONEYFACTS 01692 500677

9 January 1997

## Best savings rates

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
<b>INSTANT ACCESS</b>					
Portman BS 01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.70	Year
Bank of Scotland 0500 804804	Instant Access Savings	Instant	£5,000	5.13	Month
Bank of Scotland 0500 804804	Instant Access Savings	Instant	£10,000	5.60	Month
Direct Line 0181 667 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£50,000	5.75	Year
<b>INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS</b>					
Teachers' BS 01202 887171	Bullion	Postal	£500	4.80	1/2 Year
Melton Mowbray BS 01664 480214	Postal Direct	Postal	£1,000	5.60	Year
Sun Banking Corporation 01438 744500	Direct Postal	Postal	£5,000	5.75	Year
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select Instant	Postal	£5,000	6.25	Year
<b>NOTICE ACCOUNTS &amp; BONDS</b>					
Chelsea BS 0800 132351	POST-tel 20	20 day P	£5,000	6.05	Year
First National BS 01232 314050	High Yield	30 day	£25,000	6.45	Year
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select 60	60 day P	£10,000	6.50	Year
Leeds & Helbeck BS 0113 225 7777	Postal Bonus	30/4/98 P	£10,000	7.00	Maturity
<b>CHEQUE ACCOUNTS</b>					
Wainwright Benson 0800 317477	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.20	Month
Investec Bank (UK) 0171 626 0879	HICA 5000	Instant	£5,000	5.25	Month
Halifax BS 01422 335333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	4.25	Quarter
Chelsea BS 0800 717615	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.50	Year
<b>FIXED RATE BONDS</b>					
Portman BS 0800 663663	Fixed Interest Bond	1 Year	£500	6.60F	Maturity
Bristol & West BS 0800 202121	Year Plus Fixed Rate	1/5/98	£5,000	7.00F	Maturity
Birmingham Midshires 0645 720721	Fixed Rate Bond	2 Year	£50,000	7.05F	Year
Coventry BS 0345 685522	Fixed Rate Bond	30/11/99	£1,000	7.30F	Year
<b>FIRST TESSAS</b>					
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£8,575	7.50F	Year
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F	Year
Investec Bank (UK) 0171 626 0879	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.20	Year
Birmingham Midshires 0645 720721	Inflation Beater	5 years	£1,000	7.00	Year
<b>FOLLOW-ON TESSAS</b>					
Sun Banking Corporation 01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.50F	Year
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F	Year
National Counties BS 01372 747771	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.20	Year
West Bromwich BS 0990 143668	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£250	7.00	Year
<b>GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (GIB)</b>					
Financial Assurance 0181 3803388	Fixed Rate	1 year	£5,000	5.30FN	Year
Pinnacle Insurance 0181 207 9007	Fixed Rate	2 year	£3,000	5.90FN	Year
Hambro Assured 0800 838020	Fixed Rate	3 years	£20,000	6.05FN	Year
Hambro Assured 0800 838020	Fixed Rate	4 years	£10,000	6.25FN	Year
Hambro Assured 0800 838020	Fixed Rate	5 years	£50,000	6.45FN	Year
<b>OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)</b>					
W. Castle Bank Gibraltar 00 350 75168	Move Access	Instant	£25,000	6.30	Year
Northern Rock, Guern 01481 714600	Offshore 30	30 day	£10,000	6.55	Year
Birmingham Midshires 01481 700680	Offshore Fixed	31/1/98	£5,000	6.85F	Maturity
Northern Rock, Guern 01481 714600	Millennium Bond	1/1/00	£10,000	7.50F	Year
<b>NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (gross)</b>					
<b>Investment Accounts</b>			1 month	£20	4.75 Year
				£500	5.25 Year
				£25,000	5.50 Year
<b>Income Bonds</b>			3 months	£2,000	6.00 Month
				£25,000	6.25 Month
<b>Capital Bond</b>			Series J	5 years	£100 6.65F Maturity
<b>First Option Bonds</b>				12 months	£1,000 6.00F Year
					£20,000 6.25F Year
<b>Pensioners' G'ibbed Income Bond</b>			Series 3	5 year	£500 7.00F Month
<b>NS Certificates (tax-free)</b>			43rd issue	5 year	£100 5.35F Maturity
			9th Index linked	5 year	£100 2.50-rpi Maturity
<b>Children's Bond</b>			Issue H	5 year	£25 6.75F Maturity

P: post only. F: fixed rate. N: net rate. A: All withdrawals subject to 30 day loss of interest.

All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.

Source: MONEYFACTS 01692 500677.

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**Acid rain?**



Whizzing past the window at regular intervals are the legs of an impossibly slim woman dangling from a trapeze

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Whatever happened to...

## Acid rain?

Remember?

Acid rain was going to cause the destruction of the human race. As it silently ate away at the cracks of British heritage, abroad it was destroying the rain forests and stealing our oxygen. 17 years ago this month, a report was released saying that acid rain is seriously contaminating Britain's lakes and rivers. Public and press combined to bring the problem to the attention of the politicians: a fuss was kicked up and action was supposedly taken. But has this had any effect?

What is acid rain?

For a long time it was thought that it was caused simply by the sulphur dioxide emissions resulting from the burning of coal. But this may not be the most important cause after all and over the last few years, nitrous oxides have been increasingly blamed.

57 million Britons sweat and exhaled between 2,500 and 14,000 tonnes of ammonia every year. This is as potent an air pollutant as other chemicals that are produced when fuels are burnt.

The casualties

In July last year, acid rain was blamed for causing £30,000 damage to 50 classic cars at a rally in the Borders. Cambridge's focal point, the 550-year-old King's College Chapel, is also being gnawed away by the contaminated rainwater. But Britain was never really under too much threat from acid rain: far more damaging are the effects it has in South East Asia.

British pollutants also caused acid rain in Sweden and the

Netherlands. In 1993, the Swedish environment minister accused Britain of threatening his country's economy and environment by failing to do its fair share in cutting European air pollution. His Norwegian counterpart, Thorbjørn Berntsen, was not so polite, calling the Secretary of State for Environment a *drinks* - shitter.

What was done about it?

At first, the blame for acid rain was placed squarely on the shoulders of sulphur dioxide,

and consequently expensive action was taken to try and curb the emissions produced from burning coal. But now there is confusion over just how potent the effects of sulphur dioxide are.

And now?

The amount of nitrogen oxides in the air is increasing. Just one cause is increasing emissions from cars, rising 38 per cent between 1986 and 1991 despite the introduction of catalytic converters.

A myth?

A controlled experiment in Liphook in Hampshire was conducted to test the effect of sulphuric acid and ozone on trees. Five plots of forest have been continuously fumigated with sulphur dioxide or ozone ever since to test the theory that this causes the trees to die. They thrived.

The future

According to the Department of Environment, things could not be better. In December they

announced that the UK was among the first countries to sign up to the UNECE Second Sulphur Protocol which commits Britain to cutting sulphur dioxide emissions by 80 per cent of the levels of the 1980s.

Elsewhere, the outlook is not so rosy. According to official sources, the use of energy, and with it the emissions of sulphur dioxide, will triple during the next 20-30 years.

Sam Coates

Serena Mackesy  
In my week

Whizzing past the window at regular intervals are the legs of an impossibly slim woman dangling from a trapeze

Rob used to play Rugby. He dropped out for a year because of injuries and was taken to Circus Space by a friend. Ordinary people, when they've got injuries, take up low-impact sports like sitting around, or moaning about getting old. Not Rob. He took up tumbling, then acrobatics and then the flying trapeze. Now he works there as well. This is how modern youth runs away to join the circus.

We're not very good at circus in this country. Indeed, "circus skills" has become a shorthand catch-all insult, like "train-spotting", "anorak" and "chalet girl". The phrase conjures images of drunks in freezing caravans supplementing their income through unlocked windows. That, or blokes with beards and ponytails cross-legged on the floor, running foam-rubber balls up their arms while giving expositions on advanced spiff-rolling.

Circus Space aims to change this: built in the shell of Shoreditch Power Station, they run BTECs, practice for pros and classes in everything from knife throwing and whip cracking to clowning. So deadly is their aim, they're acting as one of the venues for the upcoming London International Mime Festival.

Waiting in the reception area (parquet floor, round tables, No Smoking signs) for Rob to show me what's what, I peer through a picture window. Six people in loose garb - mostly sweats, but there's a T-shirt and clown pants in there - bounce off a trapeze and starfish in the air. Whizzing past the window at regular intervals are the legs of an impossibly slim woman dangling from a trapeze. I'm reflecting on the rule learned and forgotten at school - that only girls with straight hair are good at gym - when a man speaks behind me. "I just had a cup of coffee," he says. "I haven't had one in ages. It's made me go really hyper. Really stressed." Ah.

Rob comes back from the shop and leads me up a corridor. At the foot of the stairs

hang bits of A4 paper. They say things like "male partner required for long-term partnership with young girl performing adagio and aerial work. Directed by top circus director" and "for sale: Japanese Unicycle, 24ins wheel, very little used". Rob's a nice guy, even though he's on a mission, like fit people always are, to stress how easy their craft is. "You don't have to be hyper-fit at all," he says. "It's not a long-capacity sport. And all of them tone you. You find your muscles get stronger quite quickly. The thought of my keyboard-shot arms trying to hold me onto a bar for more than two seconds turns me green."

On the petit volante, impossibly slim woman swings forward, pointing her toes, back, lifting her bum to avoid the platform ("when people start," says Rob, "you see them hitting their legs all the time"). Flips over and hangs by her legs. A bearded man hooks his feet into the cradle, 20ft in the air, drops



so it's 4ft thick - upright. Most land on their backs, or pinch forward and finish the manoeuvre prone on the plastic. One girl - she's got the ponytail bit right, but the rest isn't following naturally - has little luck even hitting the trapeze. She takes a run-up, goes "oops, sorry", runs back again, runs up again, goes "oops, sorry" again and gets the giggles. A man in trainers has been walking forwards and backwards on the tight-wire - it's about 2ft off the ground - solidly for about an hour and a half. One would have thought boredom would have set in, but tight-wire obviously has equivalent properties to computer games.

The people on the trapeze - what do you call them? swingers? trapezoids? - take it in turns to strap on a safety harness called a Lunge, though whether this name was derived from lunging horses or lunging towards the ground is shrouded in mystery. Secured to the ceiling by a series of pulleys, it prevents the athlete from plummeting too quickly. "You need it," Rob had said earlier. "When I first started, I was concentrating so hard on my trick that I forgot to hold on to the trapeze." It's fun watching people let go and swoop down in slo-mo: it reminds

me of Lulu as Peter Pan.

They fling themselves from the bar and catch the hands of the man on the cradle. The tumblers come off the floor and prepare to go out into the night. Everyone, it seems, has come by bike. London's bike riders are a serious lot. The sub-group no longer consists of people who've lost their driving licences; nowadays it's a way of defining yourself. As they strap on anti-taxi protection, they make plans. "You here Monday?" "Sure am. It's part of my New Year's Resolution to get my arse over here more often." "Yeah. It's part of everybody's. That's why the classes are so full. Give 'em a couple of weeks, though, and they'll have gone off the idea."

## How to be a man: walk tall, knit

In the beginning, there were things that wriggled. After a while, there were things that could swim. Some of these hauled themselves out of the water and learnt to flop. In time, they progressed from a flop to a crawl; and from there it was a short step to things that could waddle, hop, gallop, scamper and swing from branch to branch. And finally, there were things that could walk us.

Walk (Radio 3, Sunday) was a mildly pretentious look at what our peculiar method of locomotion has come to mean in the 20th century when, in Patrick Wright's phrase, it has "been reinvented as a philosophical investigation perched on legs". He'd gathered an impressive - or depressing, depending on your point of view - amount of evidence in support of this statement: Richard Mabey on walking as a means of staking out territory; Richard Long reciting one of his walking poems (and coming across, in the absence of any visual stimulation, as surprisingly pedestrian); Richard Holmes on following in the footsteps of Coleridge

Robert Hanks  
the week on radio

and Wordsworth, and feeling how the rhythms of their walks infected their poetry; Iain Sinclair (I assume - names and voices weren't always easy to connect) on following in the footsteps of William Blake, and seeing how his rambles through London were bodied out in the rambling visions of "Jerusalem"; and Tom Paulin on the vocabulary of walking - sauntering, "soodling", "going on the dander".

At times, we seemed to be wandering away from the path, and it ended in a very flat-footed fashion, with a poem

about, roughly, a Czech performance artist walking from Rimbaud's grave to William Blake's. The programme was at its best when it kept its feet firmly on the ground, standing on particular examples. Mabey, for instance, sounded sententious on the subject of walking as territorial claim, because he talked in general terms: the same point sounded far more convincing when Tom Paulin conjured the spectre of Drumscore (he was also good on the strangeness of walking in woods for someone brought up in unwooded Northern Ireland). And the sheer weight of data offered on the connection between poetry and walking made that persuasive: nobody mentioned it, but presumably this has something to do with why lines are divided up into feet.

Still, you did feel that all this emphasis on the spiritual significance of walking obscured a more important point - it's mechanical significance. We didn't, after all, evolve into bipedal animals because it made us more effective poets but because it offered us some selective advantage at some time in the past. This is

one of the main topics of *Slaves to Nature* (Radio 4, Thursday), a three-part stroll through current ideas about human evolution. Last week we got the latest thinking on uprightiness, which is that it was a good way of regulating body temperature as the African climate warmed up a few million years ago; walking upright exposes less of your body to the noonday sun and more of it to cooling air-currents; it also uses less energy than knuckle-trailing. Once this was sorted out, too, we could stop panting quite so much, which made speech possible.

All this was plausible but somehow rather dissatisfying. Much more exciting was this week's suggestion that what gave *Homo sapiens* the edge over other hominid species was that we developed needletwork. You can evolve all the layers of subcutaneous fat you like, guess the thinking, but if somebody else has come up with a decent shirt then once the next ice age rolls in they're going to be laughing at you. It's irrational. I know, but I somehow feel I ought to learn to knit.

## A right royal linguistic revolution

The last time you looked in a dictionary, "royal" was an adjective. The next time, it will have mutated into a noun. "The royals" was the sobriquet used by one and all on *Monarchy: The Nation Decides* (ITV, Tues), from Trevor McDonald all the way down to the born-again socialist Max Clifford. We now refer to the "royals" instead of the Royal Family, much as we say "privates" instead of "private parts": the second half of the phrase has been cut adrift, marooned by mass linguistic indolence. Forget the telephonic vote of confidence that ought to tell the sovereign a thing or two about how highly the monarchy is esteemed. Even royal subjects say "royals" as if it's cockney rhyming slang. (As in royal yacht: snot. Or royal box: bollocks etc.)

Given the ugly mood of the debate, it's no wonder that the most strident panellist was a popular thriller writer with a basic training in catering to the mob. Frederick Forsyth took the pulse of the audience and concluded that only blood-curdling arrogance would earn him the elbow room to have his say. "Shut up and listen", the words he scowled at anyone else on the panel who dared to challenge him, could turn into one of those catchphrases inadvertently handed down to the nation by television. A bit like

Jasper Rees  
the week on television

"Do I not like that" (or, according to Carlton's exhaustive research, "Do I not like that Parker-Bowles woman").

Among the multitude of panellists invited by Roger Cook to say their piece in 10 seconds was Rosalind Miles, captioned here as a historian. When she cropped up two nights earlier on *FutureWatch* (BBC1, Sun) she was billed as a psychologist and sociologist. Assuming she didn't switch careers some time on Monday, we can attribute the discrepancy to one of two causes. Either Carlton deemed the longer job description too polysyllabic for an audience in no mood for anything but short, sharp Anglo-Saxon. Or they simply made a mistake, to go with all the others jostling noisily under the vast overarching

mistake of the programme's actual existence.

Later that night, the people's channel redeemed itself with Avi Lewis's wonderfully rosy profile of David Bowie: *An Earthling at 50* (ITV, Tues). For reasons even the baying monarchist mob might be able to work out, turned up in the same week as Alan Yentob's parallel interview in *Changes: Bowie at 50* (BBC2, Sat). There was an unavoidable overlap: the questions, the answers, and the fact that both interviewers designed their interviews to be as much about themselves as about their interviewee. Yentob, in particular, who made a seminal rockumentary about Bowie in the mid-Seventies, was revisiting not only Bowie's but also his own creative peak.

But the textbook tells of two ways to make an arts documentary, and here they both were: the conventional narrative interview, and the mimetic essay that pays its subject the compliment of imitation. Yentob kicked off on top of a skyscraper in Manhattan, affording a clear, lofty view of straight lines. Lewis, meanwhile, was down there in the mayhem of the streets, hunting for Ziggy among the muddle of cultural signposts. Yentob included a clip from his old *Omnibus* film of Bowie cut-and-pasting his lyrics. In more exploratory style, Lewis opted to do the shuffling

for him, editing his answers into an illuminating new order. It's been done before in Bowie profiles, but never as resourcefully. In one wittily reductive sequence, the grab-bag of names Bowie dropped in the course of the interview were clubbed together into a half-minute index: there the man was, distilled to the essence of a single list.

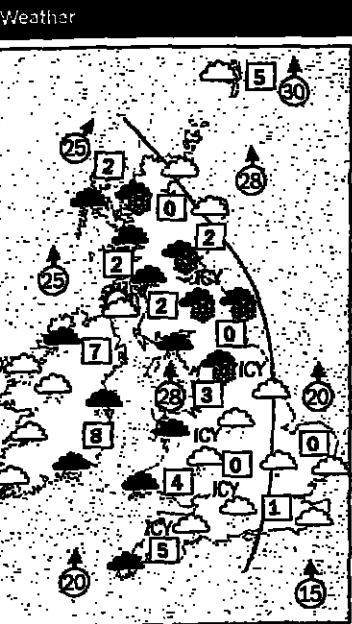
One of Bowie's *bons mots* claimed that "the 21st century began in the 1970s". We got round to confronting the moral quandaries it might throw up in *FutureWatch*, the week's other debating chamber. The set was a steel steel from Bowie's *Glass Spider* tour (or, to its friends, the White Elephant tour). In the chair, gestulating like an unfilled mime artist, was television's upmarket sensationalist Michael Buerk. Bowie's career may preach the value of eclecticism, but like historian-psychologist-sociologist Rosalind Miles, how many jobs can Buerk credibly hold down? When he read the lead item on *The Nine O'Clock News* (BBC1, Thurs) about yachtsman Tony Bullimore's miraculous escape, you could just picture him introducing the same item on 999. Newsreaders like McDonald and Buerk are hired to bring moral authority to their extramural work, but the more widely they rent it out, the more that authority is eroded.

## DAMIEN HURTS...and his painfully creative struggle

THE LONDON CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR 97  
DAMIEN, THERE SEEMS TO BE MUCH HYPE ABOUT ART BEING THE HIGH FASHION.

DO YOU THINK THIS IS TRUE, OR IS THE ENTIRE ART WORLD JUST FLOGGING A DEAD HORSE?

NO..... JUST ME!



## General Situation and 5-Day Outlook:

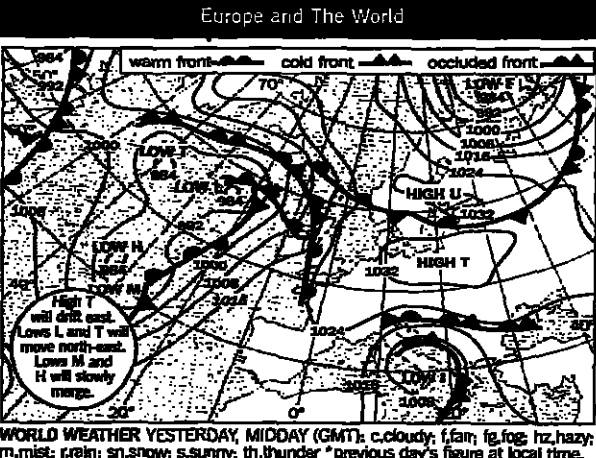
Pressure will be low to the north and west of the British Isles over the next few days with a mild southwesterly flow.

Today, sleet and snow over Scotland will turn to rain as strong southerly winds bring a rise in temperature. However, the Northern Isles will start dry with rain, sleet and strengthening winds to come. Northern Ireland will get some rain and a strong southerly wind, but it will be milder than of late. Meanwhile, rain, sleet and snow will be spreading east across England and Wales, but with the snow mostly on northern hills.

Sunday will be milder almost everywhere, with southwesterly winds. However, it will be very cloudy with some rain or drizzle in the north and west. Monday and Tuesday will see showery rain over Scotland and Northern Ireland with strong southwesterly winds. There should, though, be plenty of dry weather across England and Wales with lighter winds. The wetter, windier weather will move slowly southeast around midweek. However, it should stay fine and dry across central and eastern England.

Aberdeen	c 2 36	Cardiff	c -1 30	Ipswich	c -1 30	Oxford	c 1 34
Anglesey	c 2 36	Carlisle	c 1 34	Isles of Scilly	c 7 45	Plymouth	c 1 34
Ayr	c 2 36	Dover	c 0 32	Jersey	c 3 37	Ronaldsdown	c 3 37
Belfast	c 4 39	Dublin	c 0 32	Liverpool	c 3 37	Scarborough	c 2 36
Birmingham	c 4 39	Edinburgh	c 2 36	Lizard	c 5 41	Southampton	c -1 30
Blackpool	c 2 36	Exeter	c -1 30	London	c 0 32	Southend	c -1 30
Bournemouth	c 0 32	Glasgow	c 4 39	Manchester	c 3 37	Stornoway	c 4 39
Brighton	c 0 32	Gurnsey	c 4 39	Newcastle	c 1 34	Tiree	c 5 41
Bristol	c 0 32	Inverness	c -2 28	Nottingham	c 0 32	York	c 2 36

Lighting-up Times		Yesterday's Readings		Air Quality		High Tides	
Today		Today		Today		AM HT	PM HT
London	4:15pm to 8:02am	London	NO <sub>2</sub> Good	London	NO <sub>2</sub> Moderate	3.00	7.4 15.28 7.5
Bristol	4:25pm to 8:11am	Bristol	S England Moderate	Bristol	S England Good	0.17	9.9 12.40 10.1
Birmingham	4:18pm to 8:11am	Birmingham	Wales Good	Birmingham	Wales Good	8.40	14.5 21.07 14.4
Manchester	4:14pm to 8:09am	Manchester	C England Moderate	Manchester	C England Good	7.43	8.0 19.48 8.1
Newcastle	4:03pm to 8:25am	Newcastle	N England Good	Newcastle	N England Good	1.42	3.6 14.02 3.7
Glasgow	4:09pm to 8:41am	Glasgow	Scotland Good	Glasgow	Scotland Good	0.30	4.3 12.50 4.4
Belfast	4:23pm to 8:40am	Belfast	N Ireland Good	Belfast	N Ireland Good		

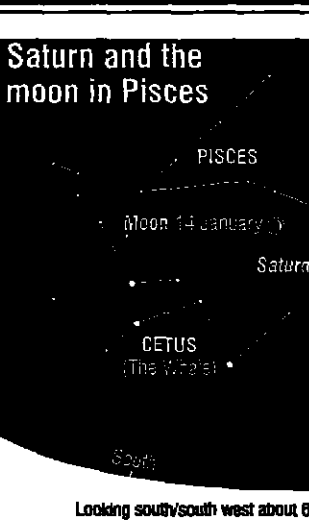


Amsterdam	c -3 27	Florence	c 10 50	New York	c -1 30
Athens	c 17 63	Frankfurt	c -2 28	Nice	c 10 50
Auckland	c -19 1	Geneva	c -2 28	Nicosia	c 19 66
Bangkok	c 30 86	Helsinki	c 17 63	Paris	c -2 28
Barcelona	c 11 52	Hong Kong	c 18 64	Prague	c -2 28
Beirut	c 19 66	Istanbul	c 10 50	Reykjavik	c 2 36
Belgrade	c 17 63	Madrid	c 10 50	Rio de Jan.	c 12 90
Berlin	c -3 27	Malta	c 16 61	Riyadh	c 24 75
Bermuda	c 18 64	Manila	c 23 73	Rome	c 10 50
Bombay	c 29 84	Moscow	c 13 91	Singapore	c 30 86
Brussels	c -5 23	Osaka	c 13 91	Stockholm	c -1 30
Brussels	c -5 23	Paris	c 13 91	Sydney	c 21 70
Brussels	c -5 23	Perth	c 13 91	Taipei	c 21 70
Brussels	c -5 23	Porto	c 13 91	Tokyo	c 10 50
Brussels	c -5 23	San Francisco	c 13 91	Toronto	c -5 23
Brussels	c -5 23	Seoul	c 13 91	Vienna	c -2 28
Brussels	c -5 23	Singapore	c 13 91	Warsaw	c -8 18
Brussels	c -5 23	Sydney	c 13 91	Washington	c 10 50
Brussels	c -5 23	Taipei	c 13 91	Wellington	c 21 70
Brussels	c -5 23	Tokyo	c 13 91		
Brussels	c -5 23	Toronto	c 13 91		
Brussels	c -5 23	Vienna	c 13 91		
Brussels	c -5 23	Warsaw	c 13 91		
Brussels	c -5 23	Washington	c 13 91		
Brussels	c -5 23	Wellington	c 13 91		

## AA Roadwatch

A406 Greater London. Angel Road, Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks over Lee Valley Viaduct to add lanes, flowers and tunnels to the North Circular. M5 Gloucestershire. J13 Stroud (A419 Stonehouse), major roadworks on the junction roundabout with only one lane open. Expect delays at times leaving or joining the M5. M22 Gloucestershire. Between J11 Hambrook (A4174 Bland Ring Road) and J2 Stapleford (B4469 Eastville). Long-term roadworks with a southbound contraflow at peak times. M8 City of Edinburgh. J2 Newbridge Spur (M19). Major roadworks. Down to 2 lanes on the roundabout. Delays likely on all approaches. A38 Cornwall. Tiddington, near Bodmin. Temporary traffic lights are likely to cause delays. Devon A381. Salcombe dip. Teignmouth. Long-term roadworks continue with traffic control at times. A35 Dorset. Buxton Road, Christchurch. Lane closed both ways for work on a new roundabout.

## The Sky at Night



Looking south/south west about 6pm on 13th and 14th January

The next seven days see the Moon waxing from a modest crescent this evening to a substantial gibbous Moon by the end of the week. Our natural satellite makes a complete circuit of the sky each month, so its position against the background of stars changes noticeably from night to night, as do its rising and setting time.

On Monday and Tuesday (the 13th and 14th), the Moon acts as a useful signpost for finding the planet Saturn in the early evening sky. On Monday, the Moon lies just below Saturn in the south-western sky. By the next night, it is somewhat above the planet. During the day the pair will have passed within two degrees of each other. The dance of the Moon and Saturn takes place in the somewhat inconspicuous zodiacal constellation of Pisces. The Moon and naked-eye planets routinely make close encounters in the sky since their paths are all confined to a relatively narrow band of constellations.

Jacqueline Mitton

سكنا من الاصل





## The big picture

Thirty Two Short Films  
About Glenn Gould  
Sat 10.55pm BBC2

Before you go and see the much raved-about *Shine*, here's a chance to compare it with another virtuoso piece about a pianist - François Girard's excellent and truly original movie about the eccentric Canadian pianist Glenn Gould (above). Gould's life (he died in 1982 aged 50) is remembered in 32 brief snapshots (some dramatised, others featuring the real Gould) - a structuring device borrowed from Bach's Goldberg Variations.

## Television preview

Recommended viewing this weekend  
by Gerard Gilbert

Sir Walter Scott's medieval romance, *Ivanhoe* (published in 1819), has had two notable screen versions made of it - a jolly 1958 TV series with a fresh-faced Roger Moore in the title role, and the full-blooded 1952 film starring namesakes Robert and Elizabeth Taylor. The book is also responsible for a pallid 1982 TV-movie starring Anthony Andrews, of all people, as the swashbuckling avenger knight.

There is nothing pallid about the BBC's new *Ivanhoe* (Sun BBC1), which delights in the muck and realism of 12th-century life in a way that Scott's historically wobbly novel never did. *Ivanhoe*, in case you didn't know, is King Richard I's right-hand seigneur, falsely accused of betraying the Lionheart to the blackmailing Austrians. He returns to England to clear his name, betroth himself to the already betrothed Rowena and generally rid the kingdom of weaselly Prince John (a delicious cameo of depraved weakness by Ralph Brown). The stills of actor Steven Waddington (imagine the Liverpool defender Mark Wright with a bad perm) make you worry that he might be in the Anthony Andrews class

of *Ivanhoe*, but he translates better in the flesh, as it were. The adaptation is by Deborah Cook and the direction, by Stuart Orme, delights, as it should, in the out-and-out romance of the piece (eyes are lighted in moments of passionate significance, for example). Good stuff. I shouldn't be surprised if this becomes the *Poldark de nos jours*.

The other must-see of the weekend is a repeat - David Hinton's Bafta Award-winning film, *Children of the Revolution* (Sat BBC2), reuniting classical musicians who studied together at Beijing's Central Conservatory during the Cultural Revolution. "Studied" is a relative term here, as most of their time was spent forming Red Guard units, beating and re-educating their teachers, and categorising composers as either "useful and harmless" (Beethoven fell into this one), "useless and harmless" or "useless and harmful". Eventually Chairman Mao had no more use for his child crusaders and packed them off to Inner Mongolia, where they had nothing left to do but till the semi-barren fields and purge each other. A stunning insight into a little understood moment in

history. By coincidence or not, the ongoing *People's Century* (Sun BBC1), now dumped on to late Sunday evening, looks at the 20 years of Mao's "great leap forward". For the truer understanding of this tumultuous epoch, though, catch *Children of the Revolution*.

Back with classical musicians, *Naked Classics* (Sun C4) this week looks at child prodigies - including a 10-year-old Korean girl who knocks off perfect violin adagios like most children her age knock off blotchy water colours of crooked houses and stick people. It's up to Nigel Kennedy, once a child prodigy himself before he was re-invented in his thirties as a punk rebel, to read out the dictionary definition of a prodigy - "something monstrous or abnormal".

*Assignment* (Sun BBC2) exposes another destination for paedophile sex tourism, Sri Lanka. According to the UN, one in five tourists to this beautiful but dirt-poor island, come to have sex with under-age children - mainly boys. The children's value in the scheme of things is articulated by a pimp, who offers an undercover journalist an all-in package for \$50 of "a hotel, air-conditioning, a boy, Fanta Cola..."



## The big match

World Professional Darts  
Sat 4pm BBC1

The only sport unlikely to be affected by the weather this weekend is the Embassy World Darts Championship. For those of you hitherto unconcerned with the upheavals in the world of feathers, the sport is going the way of boxing, with the top players fighting it out in the Sky-sponsored WDC World Darts Championship (current champ Phil Taylor), while the rump (or should that be the gut?) throw for the Embassy World Championship down in deepest Surrey. *Bullseye* referee Tony Green (above) is your commentator.

# Saturday television and radio

## BBC 1

- 7.05 *The Pink Panther* (R) (7555695).
- 7.25 *News and Weather* (7392701).
- 7.30 *Children's BBC*. *Imaginarium*. 7.40 *Speed Racer*.
- 8.05 *The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest*.
- 8.30 *The New Adventures of Superman*.
- 9.15 *Live and Kicking*.
- 12.12 *Weather* (7070850).
- 12.15 *Grandstand*: 12.20 Football Focus. 1.00 *News*. 1.05 *Racing from Leopardstown*. 1.15 *Tennis* - Sydney International: highlights of Tim Henman's semi-final match against Goran Ivanisevic. 1.30 *Racing from Leopardstown*. 1.45 *Tennis*: Preview of the Australian Open, which begins in Melbourne next week. 2.00 *Racing from Leopardstown*: the 2.10 *Ladbroke Hurdle* in Ireland, Europe's most lucrative handicap hurdle. 2.15 *Tennis*. 2.30 *Racing from Leopardstown*. 2.45 *Olympic Magazine*: a look ahead at some of the sports in next year's Winter Olympics from Nagano in Japan. 3.30 *Table Tennis*. 3.55 *Football Half-times*. 4.00 *Darts* - First semi-final of the Embassy World Championship. See the big match, above. 4.40 *Final Score* (S) (21104614).
- 5.20 *News and Weather* (9338430).
- 5.30 *Regional News and Sport* (263508).
- 5.35 *Cartoon* (194148).
- 5.45 *The Simpsons*. Nice to see this work of genius getting the wider appreciation it deserves (and check the gathering moral indignation from the *Telegraph/Spectator* end of the political spectrum). This week, Homer snatches on Krusty the Clown after seeing him commit a robbery (S) (510492).
- 6.10 *Due South* (S) (537965).
- 6.55 *The House Party* (S) (345072).
- 7.50 *The National Lottery Live* (S) (262968).
- 8.05 *Casualty*. Charlie and Baz understandably freak out when nanny Margaret turns up at Holby A & E with baby Louis and a blood-stained nappy (45579).
- 8.55 *News and Sport* (Followed by *Weather*) (921985).
- 9.14 *National Lottery Update* (456782).
- 9.15 *Deadly Invasion* (Rockne S O'Bannon 1994 US). Killer bees from South America move north to terrorise an all-American family. Kind of gets you rooting for the little 'uns, doesn't it. As anyone who saw the recent *Equinox* film about this particular breed of killer bees will know, this is locally based on real-life happenings (S) (4083782).
- 10.40 *Match of the Day*. Aston Villa v Newcastle United is the main event (S) (877398).
- 11.45 *The Frank Skinner Show* (R) (206256).
- 12.15 *Top of the Pops*. With Erasure, Blur, Kavanagh and Terrorvision (S) (77752).
- 12.45 *The Experts* (David Thomas 1988 US). Before John Travolta recreated himself as a cult item, he starred in this feeble comedy about two hip New Yorkers who become part of a KGB plot to teach Russian spies how to act American. Within two years, MacDonald would be doing it for them (357812).
- 2.15 *Weather* (1901541). To 2.20am.

## BBC 2

- 7.05 *Desperate Search* (Joseph Lewis 1952 US). Howard Keel and Jane Greer lead the search for their two children, missing after their plane crashes in British Columbia (3006411).
- 8.10 *Good Old Boy* (Tom G Robertson 1988 US). Rites of passage for a 12-year-old boy in wartime Mississippi (28014275).
- 10.00 *Chanakya* (S) (1713625).
- 10.35 *Network East*. The winner of the supermodel competition is announced and singer Akia Ahmed talks about his career (S) (6535782).
- 11.20 *Q Asia* (S) (5613850).
- 11.55 *The Natural World: Firebird*. Flamingo life in the African Rift Valley (R) (S) (7183879).
- 12.45 *Fit with Barry Norman* (S) (774072).
- 1.15 *Artists and Models* (Frank Tashlin 1955 US). New York cartoonist Dean Martin uses the wacky dreams of his pal (Jerry Lewis) as the inspiration for his strip. Shirley MacLaine co-stars (9772324).
- 3.00 *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (David Swift 1967 US). Musical satire with Robert Morse recreating his Broadway role as the window cleaner using his wiles to climb the corporate ladder. The Frank Lesser score is choreographed by Bob Fosse (53898).
- 5.00 *Top 2* (S) (9459362).
- 5.45 *Darts: World Championship*. The semi-finals (1305237).
- 7.10 *News and Sport* (Followed by *Weather*) (939459).
- 7.25 *What the Papers Say*. With Kevin McGuire of the *Daily Mirror* (S) (115891).
- 7.35 *Children of the Revolution*. See Preview, above (R) (S) (886140).
- 9.00 *The Death of Mr. X*. An episode from 1972 finds Alf Garnett visiting the hospital to meet his new grandson (7430).
- 9.30 *The Hawk* (David Hayman 1992 UK). Dourly atmospheric thriller starring Helen Mirren as a housewife who begins to suspect that husband George Costigan is a serial killer. Mirren is good - perhaps too good. She seems too intelligent to find herself in this set up in the first place (R) (S) (567898).
- 10.55 *Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould*. See the big picture, above (1993) (S) (71974411).
- 12.30 *Death of a Schoolboy* (Peter Patzak 1990 Austria). The story of the 17-year-old anarchist Gavril Princip, who fatefully assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914 (S) (9101522).
- 1.55 *Weather* (2580102). To 2.00am.
- REGIONS: Wales. 6.05pm *Darts*. 7.25 *The Noble Border*. 7.53 *A View from the Border*. 7.55 *Tending the Border*. 8.28 *A View from the Border*. 8.30 *No Borders*. 9.13 *A View from the Border*. 9.15 *Border Country*. 9.48 *A View from the Border*. 9.50 *Film: On the Black Hill*. 11.40 *Film: Screen Two: The Hawk*. 1.05 *32 Short Films*.

## ITV/London

- 6.00 *GMTV*: 6.00 *News*. 6.10 *Mole in the Hole*. 6.30 *Professor Bubble*. 6.50 *Bug Alert*. 7.10 *Disney's Wake Up in the Wild*. 8.20 *Gargoyles*. 8.55 *Masked Rider* (1851701).
- 9.25 *Scratchy and Co.*. Guests are Scottish rockers Texas and actor Anthony Edwards. Below known as *Stonesfish from Neighbours* (S) (6898169).
- 11.30 *The Chart Show* (S) (10430).
- 12.30 *The Making of James and the Giant Peach* (R) (92966).
- 1.00 *News and Weather* (96471817).
- 1.05 *London Weekend Today* (96470188).
- 1.10 *Stuntmasters* (R) (80362817).
- 1.30 *Ambush at Tomahawk Gap* (Fred Sears 1953 US). Four ex-convicts are attacked by Indians while trying to retrieve their loot from an earlier robbery. Thoroughly undistinguished western with John Hodiak, John Derek and David Brian (372592).
- 2.50 *Seabound* (S) (19847053).
- 4.45 *News and Results* (1619985).
- 5.00 *London Weekend Tonight* (1514817).
- 5.20 *Cheers*. Cher becomes infatuated with the latest member of her acting class (1967782).
- 5.50 *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (S) (535701).
- 6.15 *Gladiators*. A special New Year charity edition (S) (357614).
- 7.15 *Blind Date* (Followed by *National Lottery Results*) (S) (353898).
- 8.15 *Family Fortunes* (S) (216633).
- 8.45 *News and National Lottery Update* (Followed by *Weather*) (936817).
- 8.59 *LWT Weather* (417633).
- 9.00 *Happy Birthday Shirley*. Queen of kitsch, the extraordinary Shirley Bassey, celebrates her 60th birthday in the company of Ray Charles, Sean Connery, Bruce Forsyth, Joe Pasquale and the Muppets. You're kind of party? (S) (8898).
- 10.00 *Midnight Sting* (Michael Ritchie 1992 US). Enjoyable boxing scam movie - a sort of cross between *Rocky* and *The Sting* - with super-cool ex-con James Woods stumbling across an illegal boxing cartel and attempting to flee it with the help of ageing fight merchant Louis Gossett Jr. A nicely despicable Bruce Dern is the object of the scam (218633).
- 11.50 *In Bed with Meddler*. The TV series with the tortuously punning title returns with comedian Bob Mills surfing the airwaves for general wackiness (748256).
- 12.20 *The Final Heist* (George Mihalka 1991 US). Falling TV star Jan-Michael Vincent (*Wings of War*, *Alfred*) plays an art thief forced to come out of retirement and steal a priceless Van Gogh after his daughter is kidnapped (477198).
- 2.05 *American Gladiators* (S) (2849522).
- 2.55 *Tropical Heat* (S) (7821947).
- 3.55 *Cool Nation* (R) (6122270).
- 4.50 *Cool Vibe* (R) (38394812).
- 5.05 *Coach* (S) (4576102). To 5.30am.

## Channel 4

- 6.10 *Early Morning: Sesame Street* (R) (3372481).
- 7.05 *Elmer Fudd* from Mars (R) (8126324).
- 7.30 *Dennis* (R) (776456).
- 7.45 *First Edition* (7752121).
- 8.00 *Trans World Sport* (80566).
- 9.00 *The Morning Line* (S) (57053).
- 10.00 *Gazzetta Football Italia* (91188).
- 11.00 *Blitz* (S) (71324).
- 12.00 *Voiceover Queen* (7400256).
- 12.15 *Red Mountain* (William Dieterle 1951 US). Alan Ladd plays a Confederate officer who joins notorious rebel William Clark Quantrill (John Ireland), but turns against him after witnessing his brutal methods (757131).
- 1.50 *Racing from Wolverhampton and Leopardstown*. The 2.05 *Pierce* Leopardstown Chase, 2.20 *Tote All Weather Limited Stakes*, 2.35 *The Ladbroke Hurdle*, 3.20 *Weather's Group Maiden*, 3.50 *Corral Handicap Stakes*. Plus, recorded action from the 1.20 and 1.50 races at Wolverhampton (S) (21453053).
- 4.05 *Frances Bissell's West Country Kitchen*. Brie, honey and saffron tart is on the menu (2669169).
- 4.35 *Bus Stop*. Repeat behind-the-scenes glimpse of London's Victoria Coach Station (R) (8876481).
- 5.05 *Brookside Omnibus* (S) (4860256).
- 6.30 *Right to Reply* (Followed by *News Summary and Weather*) (S) (863053).
- 7.05 *Life After Soap*. Former soap stars discuss the problems of leaving (R) (927614).
- 7.20 *The Desert Rats* (Robert Wise 1953 UK). James Mason reprises his moving portrayal of Rommel from *The Desert Fox* as Richard Burton commands a brigade of Aussies at the Battle of Tobruk (32149237).
- 9.00 *The Frigate Hawk*. 2/3. Continuing this swift repeat of Paula Milne's heart surgeon drama. Nigel Hawthorne stars (R) (S) (4097985).
- 10.20 *The Falcon and the Snowman* (John Schlesinger 1985 US). Rather portentous spy movie based on the real-life 1970s case of a Californian college drop-out (here played by Timothy Hutton) and his druggie friend (Sean Penn) who sold American spy satellite secrets to the Russians. It's a fascinating story whose rich potential is all but discarded by Schlesinger. David Suchet and Lori Singer co-star (S) (40798508).
- 12.45 *TV Pizza*. Laura Knightlinger presents the first in a new series which travels through the world of American TV. Tonight's offerings include an interview with former *Dallas* star Charlene Tilton and an adult puppet show (2243218).
- 1.30 *The Girlie Show*. From last night (S) (57522).
- 2.00 *Ricki Lake* (R) (S) (619493).
- 2.45 *Beavis and Butt-Head* (R) (S) (4714676).
- 3.10 *Bless This House*. The American sitcom of this title (R) (S) (32842473).
- 3.40 *The White Room*. Featuring Oasis, David Bowie and PM Dawn (R) (S) (1665367).
- 4.40 *The Beat Specialists* (R) (278367). To 5.00am.

## ITV/Regions

- ASLSEA  
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *Champions of the Future* (53193740). 1.40 *Cartoon Time* (3141353). 2.00 *Arnold* (557362). 3.30 *Baywatch* (7200772). 11.50 *Film: Murder 101* (689527). 2.30am *Cartoon Knowledge* (75218). 2.30am *Sound Bites* (7605744). 2.40am *Film: Patty Hearst* (385858). 4.30-5.30am *Funky Bunker* (80638).
- CHANNEL 3 NORTH EAST/SHROPSHIRE  
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *Thunder in Paradise* (6604879). 2.00 *Cartoon* (98652614). 2.05 *Channel 3 Film: Father Came Too* (832053). 2.10 *Yorks: Film: Father Came Too* (834169). 3.50 *Baywatch* (7200772). 5.10 *Cartoon 3 Film Time* (588733). *Yorks: Scoreline* (588733). 11.50 *Instant Replay* (205896). 12.50am *In Bed with Meddler* (7907096). 1.20am *Film: Green Berets* (65175454). 3.50am *Funny Business* (83585367). 4.20am *Colles and Mezzadri Movie Club* (64088592). 4.45-5.30am *Murder*. See *Write* (6234102).
- CENTRAL  
As London except: 12.30pm *Premiere* (92966). 1.10 *Champions of the Future* (53193740). 1.40 *Movies*, Games (74965614). 2.10 *Film: Greyfriars Bobby* (820160). 3.45 *Baywatch* (7200772). 5.10 *Cartoon Extra* (5887035). 4.50am *Jeffrey* (63299305). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (6515980).
- ITV  
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *West: Sportsweek* (4114695). *Wales: Airwolf* (5941463). 1.45 *West: Film: National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* (90972256). 2.05 *Wales: Cartoon Time* (86589411). 2.15 *Wales: Film: National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* (90972256). 3.25 *West: Robocop* (93300879). 3.55 *Wales: Robocop* (9332148). 4.15 *West: The List* (942546). 11.50 *Film: Murder 101* (689527). 1.30am *Cartoon Knowledge* (75218). 2.30am *Sound Bites* (7605744). 2.40am *Film: Patty Hearst* (385858). 4.30-5.30am *Funky Bunker* (80638).
- MERIDIAN  
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *Man About the House* (79727879). 2.55 *Airwolf* (5941463). 3.50 *seasat DSX* (2418966). 3.50 *Baywatch* (7200772). 11.50 *Film: Murder 101* (689527). 1.30am *Cartoon Knowledge* (75218). 2.30am *Sound Bites* (7605744). 2.40am *Film: Patty Hearst* (385858). 4.30-5.30am *Funky Bunker* (80638).
- WESTCOUNTRY  
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *Film: Man About the House* (79727879). 2.55 *Airwolf* (5941463). 3.50 *seasat DSX* (2418966). 3.50 *Baywatch* (7200772). 11.50 *Film: Murder 101* (689527). 1.30am *Cartoon Knowledge* (75218). 2.30am *Sound Bites* (7605744). 2.40am *Film: Patty Hearst* (385858). 4.30-5.30am *Funky Bunker* (80638).
- SAC  
As C4 except: 6.10am *Sesame Street* (3372481). 10.00 *Supercade* (38121). 10.30 *New Gamesmaster* (72614). 12.00 *Moviewatch* (63966). 12.30pm *Film: Ted* (8018817). 4.05 *Baywatch* (7200772). 6.30 *Real Wedding Show* (411). 7.00 *Cartoon Time* (3141353). 7.15 *Cody* (2145466). 8.20 *Top Beach Lyn Bonser* (519041). 8.50 *Lynx Osborn* (164275). 9.25 *Film: 1472: The Conquest of Paradise* (75917985). 12.00 *Whose Line is it Anyway?* (93763). 2.00-2.45am *Ricki Lake Show* (619493).

## Radio

- Radio 1**  
(92.9-97.3MHz FM)  
7.00am Kevin Greening 10.00  
Dave Pearce 10.00 Jo Whalley 4.00  
John Peel 7.00 Danny Rampling  
9.00 Rap Show 12.00 Reggie  
Dancehall 7.30 Shirley Bassey in  
Concert 4.00-7.00am Essential Mix  
4.00-7.00am Charlie Jordan
- Radio 2**  
(88-92MHz FM)  
6.00am Mo Dutt 8.05 Brian  
Matthew 10.00 Steve Wright's Sat-  
urday Show 1.00 Arthur Smith's  
Amusing Bits 1.30 Smith and Jones  
Sound Off 2.00 Judi Spiers 4.00  
Nick Barradough 5.00 Diamonds  
are Forever 6.00 Bryan Ferry in  
Concert 7.00 The Ella Fitzgerald  
Songbooks 7.30 Shirley Bassey in  
Concert 9.00 David Jacobs 10.00  
The Arts Programme. See *Choice*,  
above. 12.05 Charles Noe 4.00-  
7.00am Mo Dutt
- Radio 3**  
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)  
6.55am *Weather*, *News Headlines*.  
7.00 *Record Review*.  
9.00 *Building a Library*.  
10.15 *Record Release*.  
11.15 *Reliques*.  
12.00 *Private Passions*. Sir Isaiah  
Berlin talks to Michael Berkeley.  
1.00 *Threads*. An exploration of  
the material world with Hannah  
Andrassy. (2/5).  
1.20 *Vintage Years: The Philhar-*  
*monia*. Examining the partner-  
ship between the Philharmonia  
and Herbert von Karajan.  
3.20 *The Finishing Touch*. David  
Campbell is joined by pianist  
Ronan O'Hara and the students  
from the Welsh College of Mus-  
ic and Drama to play and dis-  
cuss the finer points of Brahms'  
Piano Quintet in F minor, Op.  
34. (3/6).  
4.05 *The BBC Orchestras*. BBC



## Choice

The lines between art and fakery are blurred in tonight's Kaleidoscope Feature (7.20pm R4) on the critically acclaimed but non-existent poet Erri Malley, and in an Arts Programme on the actor as imitator, I Am What I'm Not (10pm R2), featuring new Marlene Dietrich look-alike Stan Phillips (left).

Symphony Orchestra/Andrew Davis, BBC Symphony Chorus (women's voices). *Holst: The Planets*.  
5.00 Jazz Record Requests.  
5.45 Music Matters.  
6.30 *Live from the Met: La Bohème*. Puccini's celebrated four-act opera about young love and death in a Parisian garret. Cast includes Marcello Giordani, tenor (Rodolfo), Patricia Rangel, soprano (Mimi), Anthony Michaels-Moore, baritone (Marcello), Paul Whelan, baritone (Schaunard), Hao Jiang Tian, bass (Colline), Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera, New York/Nello Santi. Acts 1 and 2. (7.30-8.00) The James Naughtie interview. With British baritone Anthony Michaels-Moore. Act 3. (8.25-8.50) *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Act 4. 9.30 *Blue Skies*. Professor Steve Jones attempts to quantify rock in art and science.  
10.00 *Bacon Jazz Festival*. Allyn Shipton introduces a double bill recorded at the 1996 festival. American trumpeter Tom Harrel performs with a new sextet, and the young tenor saxophonist Joshua Redman is joined by Peter Bernstein (guitar), Peter Martin

(piano), Christopher Thomas (bass) and Brian Blade (drums).  
1.00 *Through the Night*.  
1.01 *Violin Concertos*. Jascha Heifetz (violin). Odense SO/Janos Furst. Nielsen: Violin Concerto. Brahms: Violin Concerto in D.  
2.15 *Jazz from Toronto*.  
3.50 *Choral Concert*.  
4.20 *Sibelius*. Symphony No. 4. 6.00-7.00am Sequence.  
**Radio 4**  
(92.4-94.0MHz FM; 158kHz LW)  
6.00am *News*.  
6.10 *Farming Today*.  
6.50 *Prayer for the Day*.  
7.00 *Today*.  
9.00 *News*.  
9.05 *Sport on 4*.  
9.30 *Breakaway*.  
10.00 *Loose Ends*.  
11.00 *My Father Said to Me*.  
11.30 *From Our Own Correspondent*.  
12.00 *Money Box*.  
12.25 *Just a Minute*.  
1.00 *News*.  
1.10 *Any Questions?* Jonathan Dimbleby's guests are Michael Portillo MP, shadow health minister Tessa Jowell MP, chairperson of the Broadcasting Standards Council, Lady Howe,

and Andrew Foster, controller of the Audit Commission.  
1.55 *Shipping Forecast*.  
2.00 *Any Answers*.  
2.30 *Playhouse: The Venus Bar*. Humorous drama by Yana Sanja in which a spotty character becomes involved in the advertising campaign for a new chocolate bar. With Rachel Atkins and Nicholas Boulton.  
3.45 *Hitting the Bull's Eye*.  
4.00 *Island on the Edge*.  
4.30 *Science Now*.  
5.00 *Consequences*. Danyls Blake-way assesses the impact of British Telecom privatisation.  
5.40 *Footnotes*.  
5.50 *Shipping Forecast*.  
5.55 *Weather*.  
6.00 *Six O'Clock News*.  
6.25 *Week Ending*.  
6.50 *Cafe Days*.  
7.20 *Kaleidoscope Feature*. In 1943 two Australian poets decided to invent a fictional poet to what they saw as an increasingly pretentious avant garde. So taken in was the literary world by the works of "Erri Malley", that the effects of their scam still reverberate today. See *Choice*, above.  
7.50 *On These Days*.  
8.50 *Saturday Night Theatre: Wild Hops*. By Sally Worbey. With George Innes. (2/4).  
9.35 *Classics with Kay*.  
9.50 *Ten to Ten*.  
10.00 *News*.  
10.15 *The Joke*. When Hungarian-born Alan returns to his native city of Budapest after a 40 year absence, he is forced to face the consequences of a joke he passed on as a child. With John Nettles.  
11.15 *The Blue Room*.  
11.45 *Aesthetes' Foot*.

**12.00 News**.  
12.30 *The Late Story: The Stalled*.  
12.40 *Through the Night*.  
12.48 *Shipping Forecast*.  
1.00-6.00am *As World Service*.  
**Radio 5**  
(103.9MHz MW)  
6.05am *Dirty Tackle*. 6.30 Brian Hayes at Breakfast 9.05 *Weekend* with Kershaw and Whitaker 11.05 *Top Gear* 11.35 *The Game's Up* 12.05 *Baker and Kelly Upfront* 1.05 *Sport on Five* 6.06 *Six O'Clock* 8.05 *The Treatment* 9.05 *Dailyn* UK 10.05 *Brief Lives* 10.35 *Word* Up! 11.00 *Night Extra* 12.05 *Night Talk* 2.00 *Up All Night* 5.00-6.05am *Morning Reports*  
**Classic FM**  
(100.0-101.0MHz FM)  
6.00am Sarah Lucas 9.00 *Count-down* 12.00 *Gardening Forum* 1.00 Alan Mann's Packed Lunch 4.00 Jane Markham 7.00 *Russian Revelation* 8.00 *Evening Concert*. Schubert: String Quartet in E flat; Mass No 2 in G; Die Schöne Müllerin; Symphony No 5 in B flat. 10.00 *The Classic Quiz* 12.00 *Andre Leon* 4.00 *The Travel Guide* 6.00-6.05am Michael Fanstone  
**Virgin Radio**  
(101.7-102.7MHz MW 105.8kHz FM)  
6.00am Janey Lee Grace 10.00 *Jeremy Clark* 2.00 *Mark Forster* 6.00 *Lynn Parsons* 10.00 *Robin Banks* 2.00-6.00am *Howard Pearce*  
**World Service**  
(158kHz LW)  
1.00am *Newsdesk* 1.30 *Quote...* *Unquote* 2.00 *Newsday* 2.30 *People and Politics* 3.00 *News* 3.15 *Sports Roundup* 3.30 *Music Review* 4.00 *Newsdesk* 4.30 *Short Story* 4.45 *On the Move* 5.00 *Newsday* 5.30-6.00am *Weekend*



After this week's television poll on the future of the monarchy, Jack O'Sullivan plots a career strategy for the would-be Charles III, while James Cusick considers pretenders to the Scottish throne

## Dump Camilla and find us a new Queen

The public image of the Prince of Wales is apparently to be given a facelift. We are told that a five-year strategy is being developed, aimed at restoring his reputation in time for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002. By then, the Palace (that talking building) hopes that the Prince's divorce from Diana will be a fading memory, antipathy towards his mistress, Camilla Parker-Bowles, will have waned and we'll all be cheerfully waiting with the bunting for the succession of King Charles III.

At least that's the plan. And a few new advisers, including Tom Shebbeare, director of the Prince's Trust, have been drafted in to augment existing courtiers, who have so far failed to make Charles popular. The effort to improve the Prince's public standing now involves many people from beyond traditional royal circles, including Jonathan Porritt, the environmental campaigner, and Jonathan Dimbleby, the broadcaster.

But they have a tough job, promoting a man whom the public has come to regard, to coin a phrase Charles once used, as a monstrous carbuncle. The Prince's poor standing was demonstrated yet again this week when the audience of Carlton's TV's great debate on the monarchy said they would prefer Princess Anne to succeed to the throne.

So can the PR initiative make Charles loveable? I doubt it. For one thing, the Prince finds it impossible to listen to any advice for long. He has run through a lengthy list of private secretaries, from Edward Adeane, who moved on after Charles set aside royal etiquette and started criticising the nation's architects, to Richard Aylard, who left recently after being blamed when Charles's confession of adultery proved a PR failure.

It is also clear that at 48, the Prince is incorrigible. His long-standing relationship with Mrs Parker-Bowles, so damaging to public opinion, is, we are told, "not negotiable". Nor does he wish to change his lifestyle. The group will instead focus on remarketing what the Prince does already, highlighting his charitable work for the Prince's Trust, his campaigns against ugly architecture and his belief in conservation.

Yet even the cleverest marketing will not save Charles. Forget the polo matches, the flying, the action man poses. They may be what matters to Prince Charles as proof that he is man enough to be king. But they are not what the rest of us consider when reckoning up the balance sheet. What we remember is that when Prince

William ended up in hospital after cracking his skull with a golf club, Prince Charles went off to the opera. Can any of us recall seeing the Prince of Wales, would-be father of the nation, ever holding or touching his or any other child? He is a weak man who let his father bully him into marrying Diana and then proceeded to ruin his wife's life by neither supporting her properly against the pressures of royalty nor staying faithful to her. He must bear some responsibility for the fact that she went off her



Can any of us recall the Prince holding his or any other child?

head for long periods of their marriage. In an age when defence is dead, how can he expect us to look up to him?

The answer that the Prince's new advisers are likely to give is: "Look at all he does". But that is no answer to the public perception of what he is - a distant father and an unloving husband.

A further, more fundamental problem is that the activist image of monarchy so favoured by Charles is not what we want. We like the Queen because she presides almost transcendently over British society. We like her for being there, rather than doing anything in particular. Most people neither know nor wish to know what she thinks on any particular issue.

The truth is that women are more adept than men at being modern British monarchs, because they are better at just being. Men want to be kings - to do things - but they haven't

woken up to the fact that this model of monarchy is dead. The history of the last few generations is that we have been prepared to tolerate inadequate men close to the throne as long as there was a woman around to do the job properly. So we have put up with the ridiculous Prince Philip because his wife is in charge. And the rather inadequate George VI got by because Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, kept the show on the road. His brother, the short-reigning Edward VIII, would have been no good because the twice-divorced American, Mrs Simpson, was not our idea of a matriarch.

As for Charles, his quirky, eccentric, occasionally misanthropic outbursts were tolerated because at least his wife, Diana, seemed in touch with real life and would be Queen. In short, we were not waiting for a new king. We were waiting for another matriarch to replace the present Queen.

That possibility has been destroyed. Instead, we are being offered an ageing, crusty twit, who helped to destroy the matriarch-to-be. Is it any wonder that we don't have much time for him? And who is he offering as a replacement matriarch? The very woman whose activities destroyed the hopes of the favoured Diana.

Charles must realise that the task of the modern king is not to govern well, but to perform wonderful tasks, but to marry the right woman, who can then perform the symbolic tasks of which he seems incapable. If he fails to do so, he should not be surprised that people want Princess Anne as Queen.

It is easy to see why she is attractive. She came from the same dysfunctional family, but she has found a clear role for herself, done sterling, unsung work for Save the Children and been an Olympic champion. She has managed to divorce her first husband without acrimony, then marry a man she loves and still keep her children out of the public eye. Not bad for a royal who is not overly intelligent.

Anne cannot succeed to the throne, but there is another way the nation can get a matriarch into Buckingham Palace. Charles could be pressured into waiving his succession in favour of Prince William. Thus Diana would be restored to the central role of Queen Mother.

All of this points to the advice that Prince Charles's counselors should be giving him. "Dump Camilla, find a new wife everyone likes and give us the matriarch we need." But they will not be offering that advice. And Charles has made clear, for very understandable personal reasons, that he would not, in any case, listen to them.



## King Franz of Scotland?

Bonnie Prince Franz. Sounds a bit odd, but to some Scots, the present Duke of Bavaria, senior member of the German Wittelsbach family, is the man who should be at the centre of the monarchy debate, not Charles Windsor.

While the Scottish National Party leader, Alex Salmond, appears overjoyed that Tuesday's ITV gladiatorial circus left monarchists in Scotland rushing for bandages as the debate opened up old wounds, he is still pathetically clinging to a contradiction; and privately, he knows it.

In this week's admittedly unrepresentative telephone poll, 56 per cent of Scots voted against a monarchy. Thus the SNP were gifted a political window to throw out their weak and confusing policy which says that a House of Windsor monarch could remain as head of state in an independent Scotland. "Television," Mr Salmond said, "is acting as a substitute because the main parties are running away from the issue."

But he is guilty himself of running away from the main issue. Following the debate, Mr Salmond claimed that the British royal family had been discredited, because they are viewed by Scots as being an integral part of the English establishment. So why does his party cling to the idea that an independent Scotland should retain the Windsors (or more accurately, the Saxe-Coburgs) as head of state? Is the SNP frightened to ditch the system that ditched the Stuarts to replace them by the Hanoverians and subsequently the descendants of the German duchy of Saxe-Gotha and Gotha?

Are the Scots trapped in history? Or are they frightened of the future? Try as you may, it is difficult to go through the few

days of the SNP's annual conference without witnessing tears, genuine tears (shed, usually through a haze of malt whisky) for the failed Jacobite cause. The romance of their songs is usually Bonnie Prince Charlie. But the real problem was James II.

In 1685, James, a Catholic convert, succeeded to the throne of Scotland, England and Ireland and embarked on a series of pro-Catholic policies. Anxiety for the future of Protestantism intensified. By 1688, with a Catholic heir already born, seven prominent subjects invited William of Orange to lead an army to

succeed by his elder son, Franz, a 63-year-old international trade diplomat.

If Alex Salmond is serious about wanting a modern, slimmed-down "European-style" monarch restricted to a minor role in an independent Scotland, one without links to the English establishment, Prince Franz would initially seem an ideal king candidate.

Mr Salmond, although an economist, claims he knows as much of Scotland's history as anyone. He should therefore know that the Scots from the 14th century have never been too concerned with their monarchs having God-given rights.

would. But if you have thrown out the Hanoverian impostors, and you want the real royal McCoy (or at least the real Stuart), Franz the First it will have to be.

After James II's failed attempt, beginning in 1689, to regain the crown, he died in 1701. His son was James Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender. And his son, Charles Edward Stuart, became the Young Pretender, fondly known as Bonnie Prince Charlie. After his failures to regain the thrones (the 1745 clan rising), the Young Pretender went back to France and later to Italy.

From Charles Emmanuel, a member of the Italian House of Savoy, the Stuart claim passed to his brother Victor, through his daughter Mary Beatrice, to the House of Habsburg-Lorraine. Mary Beatrice's granddaughter married a prince of the Wittelsbach family, then rulers of Bavaria. Although all royal power ended when Bavaria became a republic at the end of World War One, the title is still used by the family.

According to Count Christoppe Preysing, president of the Administration of the Dukes of Bavaria, "the family does not like talking about this matter of the Jacobite title. The prince does not want to mix himself into British royal problems." Here is clear evidence for the nationalists that this is a sensible man.

But if Bonnie Prince Franz is frightened off, deciding (sensibly) to remain in Munich, there is still no royal crisis. If the majority of Scots want to be "citizens, not subjects", the Republic of Scotland it will have to be. And the race for the presidency will be on.

Favourites? Surely, only one man stands out. He has already been a king, and a leader of men - at least on film. He has shown the true nature of Scottish genes by spending plenty of time abroad playing golf. I give you President Sean Connery. Arise, King Sean I.

### A German Catholic on the throne? Surely the Orange Order would object

England. James II fled to Ireland, and the reign of his sister Mary and her husband, William, began.

To ensure that future sovereigns were members of the Church of England, the Act of Settlement was passed. It stipulated that if William and his sister-in-law Anne died without heirs, the throne would pass to Mary's distant cousin Sophia, electress of Hanover, or to her Protestant descendants. In 1714, on the death of Queen Anne, George I of Hanover succeeded to the throne of Great Britain.

The ruling dynasty of Scotland dating back to 1371, the Stewarts (Stuart is the French form of the name), had gone. Or has it?

Last July, His Royal Highness Duke Albrecht of Bavaria died at Schloss Berg near Munich. He was 91. He was the lineal representative of the Royal House of Stuart and was

The 1320 Declaration of Arbroath, a letter sent to Pope John XXII to argue for Scotland's outright independence and for recognition of Robert Bruce as their Stuart king, crucially stated that the Scottish people had agreed to make Bruce king. But they reserved the right to throw him out "and make some other man who was well able to defend us our King".

Contracts should appeal to politicians, especially with the millennium approaching. So why not a contract for Prince Franz? He does a good job, and on the power of the Arbroath declaration, the Scots simply get someone else.

A German Roman Catholic on the throne of Scotland? Surely the resident Protestant population of Scotland, especially the more militant members of the Orange Order, would object. I'm sure they

He died childless in Rome in 1788, and his younger brother Henry (called Henry IX by faithful Jacobites) succeeded him. Henry, a Roman Catholic cardinal, died in 1807.

In his will, the cardinal passed the Stuart claim to the former king of Sardinia, Charles Emmanuel IV. The right derives from Charles's great-great-grandfather, who was married to Henrietta Stuart, James II's sister.

## Personal Equity Plans

Sunday 12th January 1997

The Independent on Sunday's Business section will be publishing a comprehensive survey on Personal Equity Plans.

The survey will identify what they are and who should consider them.

It will also define the different types of PEPs available and include a table of the leading providers.

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

## another planet

Scientologists who accuse Germany of Nazi-style persecution beggar belief

david aaronovitch



One day - when I was a teenager - I decided to have my personality tested. For weeks I had passed the odd-looking bookshop near Goodge Street Tube station, on London's Tottenham Court Road, which advertised on the spot analysis. Perhaps it was the luridly illustrated science-fiction paperbacks in the window, or the insistent manner with which the man in the doorway invited youngsters (always youngsters) to come inside, that put me off. And then, in a fit of self-confidence, I went inside and filled in the interminable questionnaire about holes in my life (none, unfortunately), spiritual emptiness (also absent) and my longing for completeness (incomplete).

Someone in the shop took a quick shufti, looked me up and down and bade me farewell. And thus ended my only brush with the Church of Scientology.

Had I been slightly more promising material, I would have been slowly drawn into sessions of self-exploration. Gradually truths (as witnessed by Scientology's founder, L Ron Hubbard, sci-fi author and honorary Venusian) would have been revealed to me. I would have come to know how evil Lord Xenu filled the world with alien Engrams some 75 million years ago, how these

can be measured by a machine passing 1.5 volts through your body, how they can then be purged through a mixture of psycho-babble and mumbo-jumbo called dianetics. And how giving vast amounts of your time and money to the Church of Scientology can assist the process of becoming a Tethan - one of the elect. I might have been one of the several millions worldwide who subscribe to this nonsense.

According to a group of Hollywood writers and actors - including heroes of mine such as Gore Vidal and Dustin Hoffman - I have had a fortunate escape. For had I become an aspirant Tethan, I might then have faced a similar persecution at the hands of the modern German government to that which was experienced by many of my (never-met) Jewish relatives in the Nazi Germany of the Thirties.

This alarming charge was to be found in a full-page advertisement, "an open letter to Helmut Kohl", the German Chancellor, in Thursday's edition of the *International Herald Tribune*. "In the 1930s it was the Jews," says the ad. "Today it is the Scientologists." Then, "the world stood by in silence" as "Jews were marginalised, then excluded, then vilified and ultimately subjected to unspeakable horrors". Not any more.

"Extremists of your party should not be permitted to believe that the rest of the world will look the other way. Not this time."

Joining Hoffman and Vidal in signing this remarkable accusation are Costa-Gavras, CNN's Larry King, Mario Puzo, Oliver Stone and a score or more of Hollywood's finest.

Here are some questions that I would like to ask the co-signatories. Have Scientologists' assets been seized? Have their churches been systematically burned? Is there a law forbidding intermarriage between Scientologists and Germans? Do gangs of semi-licensed thugs roam the streets beating up Scientologists? Are there embryonic concentration camps where leading Scientologists are incarcerated without proper process? Do ordinary people spit at Scientologists in cafés and restaurants? Are the cinemas filled with films depicting Scientologists as vermin? Does the Number One hit on the Kuffirstendamm this year contain the words "when Scientologist blood spurts from the knife, then I feel good"?

No. What has happened is that the democratic Germans have taken Scientology seriously (just as they take everything, from bowel movements to dental hygiene, seriously), are wondering

about how to dissuade the impressionable from joining the cult, and getting it a bit wrong. The youth wing of the CDU has tried to boycott a Tom Cruise film (because of his membership of the cult), but exercises about the same influence on the young as a line-dancer at a rave. The European Court will sort the whole thing out.

But Hollywood, with its rich schmuzzies, talented schmucks, political schmos, public schlemiels and casting-couch schmorrers, with its fêted campaign endorsers, with its Cinemascope understanding of the great issues in world history (Liam Neeson Scots nationalists, Kevin Costner cowboys, Dan Day Lewis Irishmen), with its tenuous grasp on any notion of morality, Hollywood knows better. It looks at one of the two or three most democratic states in the modern world and cries "Nazis".

Actually, there is a group whose treatment by democratic societies holds a much better parallel for the Church of Scientology. This group is forbidden from practising its rituals openly, its assets are seized and burned, it is not allowed to trade, it is forced into a shadowy, criminal existence, it is not tolerated in schools, it may not be propagated. I refer, of course, to drug-taking. Druggies - the new Jews. How about it, Gore?



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## The innocent must be praised, the guilty stigmatised

*faith or reason*

**The churches are bedevilled by sexual scandal. What should the Church of England do about it? Deal dramatically with offenders, says Andrew Brown.**

The original article came out in the autumn of last year. But it will undoubtedly hang around for years as a 'Warning of what happens when you let the liberals take over. I have to say this reading of it seems to me nonsensical. The link between right belief and right behaviour is elastic at the best of times and the pathways of sin are beset by temptations. First, there is the problem that all Christians, from St Paul onwards, of 'downward' know that they have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; and that this will happen to them again. Then, there is the still more horrible truth that these sins are usually the same ones; and that no amount of orthodoxy can by itself ensure good behaviour. There seem to have been plenty of im-

peccably orthodox Roman Catholic priests who exploited their mistresses.

Still, the *Penthouse* story does show that the Church of England has been fairly lucky in its scandals. I am sure that many of its priests here have never been caught in a homosexual marriage ceremony or drag; it may even be the case that none has even done it. In their place is the steady drizzle of heterosexual scandals which were what I had actually meant to write about until the e-mailed *Penthouse* story appeared on my screen. And they pose a difficulty for the Church because they are not, as I had intended, the problem lies exactly in the fact that they are scandals: they are public dramas which require a public resolution. This is not just an argument about hypocrisy. Whenever a priest does something ridiculous or disgusting it will be blamed on his theology; but this does not make him a hypocrite.

The problem lies in the theatrical aspects of a scandal. Though it is often said that the Church of England does ceremonies better than almost any other body, it has grown less and less confident about performing. In fact Dr Carey's apparently unshakable self-confidence as a performer, his certainty that there is an appreciative audience for whatever he has to say, may be his greatest gift to the Church of England.

There are signs the Church is recovering its theological nerve, so to speak. But the public resolution of scandal is still something it does badly and needs to do better. Pastorally it seems to do fine. I can't imagine any Anglican clergyman anywhere being as crashingly insensitive as Cardinal Winning appeared to be in the Roddy Wright scandal.

Yet the public, dramatic side of the business is still mismanaged. There needs to be a dramatically satisfying resolution to a scandal if it is not to be poisonous; it is one of the great strengths of conservatives over liberals that they understand the importance of this. The innocent must be praised, and the guilty stigmatised. The resources for any amount of public drama are still there: later this month a County Durham prisoner will be tried in the palace at Bishop Auckland on charges of seducing a parishioner he should have been counselling. This is rather distressing for those of us who have spent much of last year explaining that the mechanism would never be used again. It is of course a great deal more distressing for the participants.

But it is a necessary opportunity for the Church to establish, through the cruel theatre of the law courts, that priests do not abuse their position and their parishioners – or that, if they do, they stop being priests.

صديق من الأهل



[illegible]

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## Foreign Exchange Rates

STERLING			DOLLAR			D-MARK	
Country	Spot	3 months	Country	Spot	3 months	Country	Spot
US	1.9492	12.10	39.36	1000	—	—	0.6377
Canada	2.2969	54.49	—	1000	—	—	0.6377
Germany	2.0569	28.41	223.93	1000	24.23	75.77	1026.9
France	2.0909	27.96	244.02	1000	20.37	92.47	1026.9
Italy	2.0933	27.91	244.02	5.982	66.81	269.26	3.3752
Japan	198.71	51.48	826.76	1000	26.25	91.91	97.470
UK	127.28	21.18	66.46	1000	27.17	105.12	1026.9
Denmark	10.566	12.40	107.76	12323	53.14	34.45	0.5147
ECU	12.72	22.27	101.45	32.485	7.5	20.7	20.269
Netherlands	2.5869	82.40	246.26	17.09	69.79	286.47	1026.9
Sweden	10.566	12.40	107.76	1000	27.17	105.12	1026.9
Norway	10.566	12.40	107.76	1000	27.17	105.12	1026.9
Spain	226.31	53.10	5.10	64.44	50.25	18.49	0.4907
Portugal	17.31	220.30	100.00	1000	27.17	105.12	1026.9
Australia	2.0933	27.91	244.02	63.65	41.16	152.01	4.3947
Hong Kong	10.566	12.40	107.76	1.565	40.12	12.14	0.8867
New Zealand	2.0933	27.91	244.02	1.565	40.12	12.14	0.8867
South Africa	2.0933	27.91	244.02	1.565	40.12	12.14	0.8867
Switzerland	2.0933	27.91	244.02	1.565	40.12	12.14	0.8867
Other	2.0933	27.91	244.02	1.565	40.12	12.14	0.8867

Notes: Forward rates quoted here for 90 days and 180 days. Forward rates for other periods are available on request. All rates are for 100 units of the foreign currency against 100 units of the dollar. All rates are for 100 units of the foreign currency against 100 units of the dollar.

## Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	189.43	0.9999
Brazil	189.43	0.9999
Canada	173.88	1.0000
France	189.43	0.9999
Germany	189.43	0.9999
Italy	189.43	0.9999
Japan	189.43	0.9999
UK	189.43	0.9999
US	189.43	0.9999

## Forward Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	189.43	0.9999
Brazil	189.43	0.9999
Canada	173.88	1.0000
France	189.43	0.9999
Germany	189.43	0.9999
Italy	189.43	0.9999
Japan	189.43	0.9999
UK	189.43	0.9999
US	189.43	0.9999

## Interest Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	189.43	0.9999
Brazil	189.43	0.9999
Canada	173.88	1.0000
France	189.43	0.9999
Germany	189.43	0.9999
Italy	189.43	0.9999
Japan	189.43	0.9999
UK	189.43	0.9999
US	189.43	0.9999

## Bond Yields

Country	5 yr	10 yr	15 yr	20 yr
Argentina	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Brazil	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Canada	173.88	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
France	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Germany	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Italy	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Japan	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
UK	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
US	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999

## Money Market Rates

Country	5 yr	10 yr	15 yr	20 yr
Argentina	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Brazil	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Canada	173.88	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
France	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Germany	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Italy	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
Japan	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
UK	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
US	189.43	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999

## Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement price	High/Low for day	Open interest
Long Call	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Put	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Call	100.00	100.00	



# business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098  
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

## British banks face exclusion from Target system

Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

The first concrete evidence that the UK's lukewarm attitude to European monetary union (EMU) is damaging British interests was revealed by a new report yesterday.

Despite strong Bank of England lobbying, the European Monetary Institute has left the way open for the exclusion of UK banks from full access to funds under the single currency through restrictions on Target, the planned payments system for euros.

In an exclusive interview with *The Independent*, Alexandre Lamfalussy, president of the EMI, said: "To be candid, if the UK stays out of EMU and does not participate at the beginning, a number of things will escape British influence."

The EMI said yesterday in a long-awaited report on monetary policy under the single currency that the decision to restrict access to Target for non-member countries would be left to its successor, the European Central Bank. The ECB will be composed only of member countries, and the French

and Germans have made clear their absolute determination not to permit London-based banks equal access to euro funds from the new central bank if Britain does not join.

Mr Lamfalussy warned: "The ECB will have the technical possibility of not granting unlimited credit. If the UK is not there, you will have no voice in that."

In a statement the Bank of England noted only that the debate about non-member access to euro funds within the trading day had been left "unresolved".

So too was the question of

whether the ECB will impose minimum reserve requirements on member banks, another proposal the Bank of England has steadfastly opposed.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor who was speaking in Japan yesterday, insisted that not joining EMU would not harm London's interests. "I don't think staying out of EMU poses any threat to the predominant position of the City of London," he said.

But City experts were concerned that the two obstacles had not been removed. "It is worrying that a key issue like the

question of minimum reserves has not been resolved," said Michael Lewis at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell.

Tim Sweeney, director-general of the British Bankers' Association, said: "The imposition of reserve requirements is unnecessary for the efficient conduct of monetary policy and threatens to distort the market. In an open market, it will also siphon banking business out of the euro area."

However, the imposition of minimum reserve requirements would put UK banks at an advantage if Britain remained

outside EMU. In other respects, yesterday's report was warmly welcomed by the Bank of England, which had clearly had an influence on its other conclusions.

Mr Lamfalussy said: "If I were judging from the way the Bank of England is participating, I would not have known the UK was not expecting to join EMU."

In particular, the report recommended the adoption of an explicit target for inflation or the money supply, saying that in practice the operation of monetary policy would be similar in

either case. The public announcement of a specific target would be essential to assess the performance of the ECB, whose statute makes price stability its overriding responsibility.

The central bank, when it comes into existence during 1998, will set monetary policy by using open market operations to influence short-term interest rates. These operations will take the form of tenders in the market for "repos", agreements for the sale and repurchase of government securities.

Since the introduction last year of the gilts repo market, the

Bank has fallen closer into line with continental central banks in its monetary techniques. The EMI report gives details, unanimously agreed, about how banks and other institutions can qualify to take part in the Euro repo market.

It also spells out the need for the ECB to have access to adequate statistics and make its own economic assessments and inflation forecasts.

The full interview with Alexandre Lamfalussy, president of the EMI, will be published on Monday.

## Halifax members to receive £1,300

Jill Treanor  
Banking Correspondent

More than 8 million members of Halifax can expect an average share payout of around £1,300 when the building society floats on the stock market in June. Each qualifying member, including savers and borrowers, will receive a minimum of 200 free shares, which are estimated to be worth between 390p and 450p each.

Around 4.1 million people will be entitled to this basic distribution while the rest will receive an additional hand-out of up to 1,181 shares depending on the balance in their accounts on two key dates.

An additional distribution of shares will be paid to members who had a total balance of at least £1,000 on 25 November 1994 and 24 February 1997. The additional shares will be worked out from the lower of the two balances.

The maximum will be made to savers with more than £50,000 in their accounts. Savers and borrowers are entitled to two payments.

The share price valuations are made by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, the merchant banking adviser to Halifax, on the assumption that the society was floated on 16 December 1996. It estimates the society would have had a market capitalisation of £10.4bn to £12bn on that date.

Rob Thomas, building society analyst at UBS, the investment bank, said Halifax was being cautious about its payouts. "My mid point would be their top end," he said.

Over the next few days members of Halifax will receive a 172-page transfer document in which Mike Blackburn, chief executive of the society, urges them to vote in favour of the flotation.

"Halifax's conversion will represent the largest single extension of private share ownership ever witnessed in the UK," Mr Blackburn said.

Members can vote by post by 17 February or at the special general meeting in Sheffield on 24 February.

More than 50 per cent of the society's investing members, over 3.3 million, must vote in

favour of the flotation to proceed. This is a greater proportion than required by the other societies which intend to become banks, such as Alliance & Leicester and Woolwich, because Halifax is taking a slightly different route to flotation, principally because it has waived its right to a five-year protection against being taken over.

The flotation is likely to receive enough votes to go ahead although it is facing some opposition from Halifax Action Group. "This [flotation] is being done largely to benefit those in the City who have raked in enormous fees and bank members whose salaries have and will increase enormously," said Serge Lourie, a chartered accountant who is running the action group and standing for election to Halifax's board.

Mike Ellis, banking and savings director at Halifax, said the board was aiming to avoid such accusations. "We're not taking share options to distance ourselves from those comments," he said.

Halifax is not establishing executive share options at conversion but intends to introduce a long-term incentive scheme in 1999. Directors of the society participate in a short-term and medium-term bonus scheme. The medium-term one will not pay out unless Halifax completes its conversion process.

The directors have waived their rights to the free shares being distributed to employees of the society and will only take those shares they are entitled to as borrowers or savers.

Mr Blackburn, who earned a total of £405,000 in the year to January 1996, will receive 707 free shares.

There is a cash bonus for members aged under 18 because they are ineligible to vote. It is approximately 9.4 per cent of balances in share accounts.

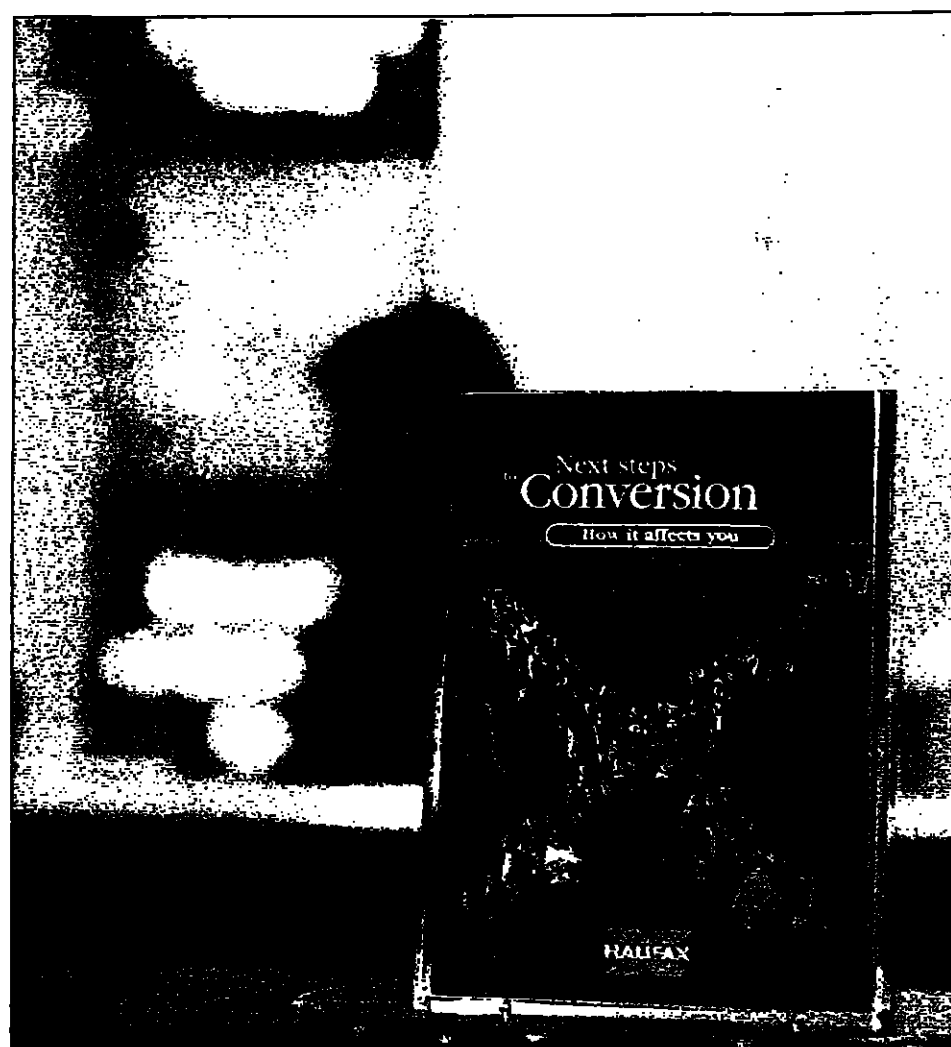
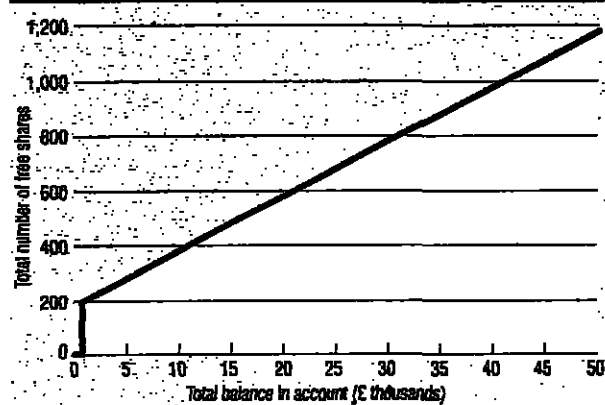
To cope with the first day of trading Halifax will ask members in April or May to indicate whether they intend to sell their shares. It will offer members keeping their shares three options - placing them in a nominee account, receiving the share certificates, or putting the shares into a PEP account.

Some City experts blamed the

### Countdown to conversion

- Transfer documents and voting forms are being posted now to 8 million members.
- Halifax's conversion and free share distribution needs approval from 3.35 million members.
- Voting forms have to be returned before 18 February.
- Savings of at least £100 on 25 November and 24 February 1997 are needed to qualify for free shares.
- Minimum handout is 200 shares which will be worth between £780 and £900.
- Maximum hand-out is 1,181 shares, worth £4,606 to £5,315, on balances of £50,000-plus.
- Dealings in the shares on the Stock Exchange are due to begin in June.

### Halifax: free share entitlement



Gearing up for a conversion: Many Halifax shareholders have already decided how they will spend their windfalls. Photograph: Jason Bye

## Lucky savers head for the sun

The cold winter weather could well lead to many Halifax members deciding to spend their windfall on lapping up some sun this summer.

"In January I'm feeling in the doldrums. If I'm sensible I'll take a holiday," said Lily Armitage, a secretary from Bexleyheath and Halifax member.

But it could be a close call. "We'll probably spend it on our home. We have a very old Victorian home," she said.

Kay Hamilton, who works as a secretarial assistant in the chairman's office at Halifax in London, intends to cash in some of her shares to take herself and her two grown-up sons on holiday in the summer.

"I'll keep the shares from the employee scheme, though," the 47-year-old divorcee said. Ms Hamilton, who lives in Putney, is a self-confessed carpetbagger and will get free shares from the forthcoming Woolwich and Alliance & Leicester flotations.

Other Halifax members, such as Elaine Arter, 45, of Hornchurch, intend to hold on to their shares. "We don't need the money right now," she said. However, she thought her two adult children were more likely to spend the proceeds of their shares.

Tracey Pollard, 26, from Leyton, will keep her shares, as will Russell Walling, a 36-year-old software development manager from Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire. "I'll keep them. It's probably a good thing to have shares in the banking sector," Mr Walling said.

However, he had some reservations about the flotation. "Building society borrowers and savers will lose out in the long term," he said.

Jeremy Brazil, a 34-year-old insurance underwriter from Reading, has a mortgage with Halifax but took it out too late to receive free shares. He is eligible for the Woolwich payout, however. "We've just moved house. It cost an arm and a leg and we'll use it for a holiday," said Mr Brazil, who is married with a son.

## Tokyo plunge sets tone for market jitters

Tom Stevenson  
and Diane Coyle

Markets around the world experienced another volatile session yesterday after Tokyo set a jittery tone with a 770-point plunge. Higher-than-expected employment figures in America sent Wall Street into an early downward spiral, catching London in the backwash despite receding fears here of an early rise in UK base rates.

Stock markets bore the brunt of investors' nerves, but in the US Treasury bonds also tumbled after a government report showed the unexpected rise in jobs last month was increasing wages, fanning inflation and bringing closer a rise in the cost of borrowing. The Labor De-

partment said 262,000 jobs were created last month, more than the 200,000 economists had expected and a worrying inflationary pointer, analysts said.

Worries that the cost of American money would rise soon helped push the yield on 30-year government bonds to their highest level since September. "Slowly but surely the market's beginning to factor in a bit of a tightening," said one US fund manager.

The fall in Tokyo took the slide in the Nikkei index to more than 2,000 points in the year's first full week of trading - according to one estimate a sum half the size of Canada's whole economy has been wiped off Japanese stocks over the past week.

At 17,303.65, the benchmark Japanese index has fallen more than 10 per cent in only five dealing sessions to its lowest level for 17 months. It has been the largest five-day decline since 1990 when the Japanese bubble economy burst and the stock market started a fall that wiped out half its value in less than two years.

Selling in Tokyo has reached panic proportions according to some market observers with eight shares falling for every one that has risen. "They're selling the good as well as the bad," said one Japanese fund manager. Another added: "There are so many problems with the economy that have not been solved. The market is melting down."

In London, shares were hit by an early 67-point fall on Wall Street, despite a later recovery in the US market, and an expectedly downbeat assessment of December retail sales from the Confederation of British Industry, which was compounded by a profit warning from catalogue retailer Argos. The FTSE 100 index closed 30.4 points lower at 4,056.6 as the Wall Street drag was tempered by sluggish manufacturing output figures which appeared to increase Kenneth Clarke's chances of getting to the general election without the need to raise interest rates further. They showed an unexpected drop in manufacturing output last month.

Some City experts blamed the

fall on the recent strength of the pound for the setback. But the Treasury and other City economists said the decline was probably a blip, as it was too soon for sterling's rise to have had much impact.

The pound dipped in reaction to the fresh hopes that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would get away with leaving the cost of borrowing unchanged before the election. It fell by a penny to close at DM2.6635.

Manufacturing output fell 0.5 per cent during December, with declines across a wide range of industries. Higher energy output due to bad weather took total industrial production up 0.4 per cent during the month.

Market Report, page 20

## £684m Gehe bid set to clinch Lloyds battle

Magnus Grimond

Gehe, the German pharmaceuticals distributor, yesterday looked close to clinching the 12-month bid battle for Lloyds Chemists after raising its all-cash offer to £684m.

The bidder moved into the market to scoop up just under 21 per cent of Lloyds' shares soon after the announcement that the offer was being raised from 500p to 525p a share and made final.

The move comes a week before the final deadline for higher offers, but Dieter Kammerer, Gehe chairman, said the delay was damaging the business. Since the start of the

bid last January, Gehe estimated the value of Lloyds had declined by around 10 per cent. Adding that back to the revised terms, would value them at more like 560p to 570p a share, he claimed. There was no word from rival bidder UniChem yesterday but analysts said it would be difficult for it to top Gehe's terms.

Shares in Lloyds jumped 14p to 526.5p, but UniChem's were also 10p higher at 256p on expectations that it would not increase its offer. If UniChem does bow out, directors could make £4.3m in option profits and pay-offs, while the stake belonging to Allen Lloyd, chairman, could be worth £32m.

STOCK MARKETS									
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield (%)	Index	Close	Day's change
FTSE 100	4056.6	-50.0	-0.0	4118.50	3632.30	3.81	Nikkei	17303.65	-770.0
FTSE 250	4517.70	-14.60	-0.3	4568.60	4015.30	3.47	Dow Jones	8690.00	-100.00
FTSE 350	2034.10	-1.80	-0.1	2043.80	1816.60	3.74			
FTSE SmallCap	2229.15	+2.94	+0.1	2244.36	1854.06	3.02			
FTSE All-Share	2006.15	-1.29	-0.1	2013.66	1791.95	3.68			
New York	5625.67	+76.19	+1.1	6600.66	5032.94	2.03			
Tokyo	18073.87	-806.51	-3.2	22666.80	18073.87	0.84			
Hong Kong	13196.11	-256.82	-1.9	13530.95	10204.87	3.09			
Frankfurt	2892.63	-13.71	-0.5	2909.91	2253.36	1.99			

Statistics as of 10 January

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling*			UK medium gilt			US long bond			
6.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	
6.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	
6.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	
6.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	
6.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	
6.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	
6.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	
6.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	
6.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75	

\*All Bank Rate rates

CURRENCIES									
£/\$			£/DM			£/¥			
1.72	2.27	2.27	2.27	2.27	2.27	2.27	2.27	2.27	
1.71	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	
1.71	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	
1.71	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	
1.71	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	
1.71	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	
1.71	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	
1.71	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	
1.71	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	

\*All Bank Rate rates

Statistics as of 10 January

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JEREMY WARNER

Since he sold his original, core music business to EMI four years ago, Mr Branson has struggled to find anything that comes close to filling the gap.

## Virgin phenomenon rides on a lot of hot air

Is Virgin really the only internationally recognised global brand to have emerged from Britain over the past 20 years? In a recent article for *The Economist*, Richard Branson, Virgin's founder and guiding light, came close to making this claim. Mr Branson's inflated attempt to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon has reminded us all that in some respects at least, he is probably right. Furthermore, the inference he draws from it – that this is a quite damning indictment of the British economy – is right too.

While it is true that there are still quite a lot of born-in-Britain brand names waltzing around the world – BP, Shell, Unilever, ICI, the BBC and even British Airways – these are not recent creations. There is nothing that has come out of Britain since the war to compare with BMW, Nike, McDonalds or Sony.

Except, perhaps, Virgin. The pity of the Virgin phenomenon, however, is that this is precisely what it is – more of a phenomenon than a brand and one, moreover, that feeds almost entirely off the publicity-seeking antics of one man. There is no definable product behind Virgin that sustains it as a brand. There is no ultimate driving machine, or Walkman, or fashion sportswear. Many and varied are the attempts to stamp established products with the Virgin name, but this is a rather different thing. And although the Virgin name is hugely well known, it is

also the case that for the time being its fame is unmatched by its substance.

In that sense Virgin is a quintessentially British thing. A bit like the Beatles, everyone's heard of Virgin, but it is hard to know whether this fame generates any tangible benefit. In other words, is not the Virgin phenomenon just a lot of bluster and front, mostly (forgive the analogy) hot air?

I read somewhere that Mr Branson's balloon trip generated well over £300m of free publicity for the Virgin "empire", or more than Pepsi Cola spent worldwide on its much-criticised relaunch. I find this rather hard to believe, especially since the exercise was a damp squib. But let's accept that even disappointing publicity is good publicity, especially when it is free. Free publicity for what though?

Since he sold his original, core music business to EMI four years ago, Mr Branson has struggled to find anything that comes close to filling the gap. These days Virgin amounts to a small but highly successful and profitable airline, a small and moderately successful soft and alcoholic drinks business, a small and entirely unproven financial services operation, the Virgin megastores (reasonably profitable in the UK, unprofitable overseas), a relatively successful film and entertainment division, a couple of rail franchises, a stake in the high-speed Channel Tunnel rail link project, an even smaller

stake in Eurostar, a stake in MGM cinemas in the UK, now rebranded Virgin, and... yes, that's about it.

With total annual sales of approaching £1.5bn, this is obviously no small enterprise. Furthermore, at the moment it is reasonably profitable. Pre-tax profits this year should amount to about £100m. The vast bulk of this, however, is Virgin Atlantic. The rest wouldn't even qualify Virgin for the FTSE 350. By international standards, it is tiny. What is more, Mr Branson's hotch potch of entirely unrelated interests could hardly be a more unfashionable form of corporate organisation, in stock market terms at least – this on the not-unreasonable logic that people who are good at running airlines are unlikely to be good at financial services too.

Mr Branson believes received wisdom of this sort to be a canard, and in an entrepreneurial but small-scale way he is proving his point. His comparison of Virgin with the Japanese Keiretsu is an entirely bogus one, however. While it is true that Mitsubishi, one of the largest Keiretsu (family of companies) lends its name to a whole range of business interests from cars to textiles and financial services, the link between these companies is not nearly as strong as he would have us believe. Internationally it is not recognised at all. John Smith of Surbiton might wish to buy a Mitsubishi car but he is highly unlikely to bank with them too.

Virgin is a quite different sort of "family". Both in ownership and management terms, it is dominated by just one man. Mr Branson is the cement that holds Virgin together and drives it forward. Without him, it would very rapidly fall apart.

But let's not be churlish about this. Virgin is responsible for a string of entrepreneurial successes, some of which have also pushed out the barriers of product development. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this though. Rather, Virgin's uniqueness is derived from the fact that such a disparate collection of quite small businesses could command such strong international recognition. This is undoubtedly a wonderful and heroic achievement. But Virgin as a panacea for Britain's economic woes, a new global brand for the next century? I'm going to take some convincing.

Any Chancellor who took 10p off the basic rate of income tax in present circumstances would be accused of recklessness to the point of criminality. That, however, is roughly what the free share handouts from demutualising building societies are going to deliver to the British masses over the next year – more if the stock market flotation of the Norwich Union and other likely life assurance demutualisations are taken into account. In total over £20bn of new money will be entering the economy. If only a half

of that windfall is realised (with the rest left stashed away in the bottom drawer) we are still talking about a very substantial boost to consumer spending.

Is this really the windfall we all think? For those without qualifying building society accounts the effect will almost certainly be financially negative. Even for the 15 million members who benefit directly, the net effect may not be particularly advantageous. This is because pump-priming consumer spending on this scale, even when it is not being done by the Government, must inevitably result in higher interest rates. Quite how much higher interest rates will be by the end of the year as a result of all this is anyone's guess, but higher they certainly will be. Borrowing costs and mortgages will be that much more expensive than if the Halifax, Alliance & Leicester, the Woolwich and others had not floated.

Furthermore, it may well be that demutualisation will in itself lead to higher long-term borrowing costs and less competitive deposit rates. After flotation, the main priority of building societies will be to serve shareholders. That means hundreds of millions of pounds in dividend payments that would otherwise go towards keener interest rates. Pressure to improve short-term returns yet further by milking the customer will be intense. All of which goes to show that there is no such thing as a free lunch.

## £500m British Gas demerger costs shock City

Chris Godsmark  
Business Correspondent

British Gas yesterday surprised investors and analysts by announcing a further £500m of restructuring provisions, inflated by huge redundancy costs, in preparation for next month's demerger of its supply business, which will be called Centrica.

The write-offs, disclosed in more than 200 pages of documents to shareholders outlining details of the demerger, will more than wipe out the company's annual profits for 1996. They come on top of expected provisions announced yesterday of £341m to cover the recent deals with oil giants BP and Mobil to renegotiate some of British Gas's £30bn-worth of long-term North Sea "take-or-pay" contracts to buy gas at inflated prices.

British Gas had already announced exceptional charges of £457m in the first nine months of last year to cover losses on its take-or-pay contracts. Based on analysts' forecasts, the total write-offs would plunge the company into losses of about £400m when the results for 1996 are announced on 27 February, compared with profits in 1995 of £607m.

The group said the £500m charges would cover further redundancy payments, write-downs on the value of British Gas's huge property portfolio and the costs of the demerger

process itself, estimated at £55m. Roy Gardner, chief executive designate of Centrica, defended the scale of the write-offs, which he maintained were in line with the company's existing "conservative" accounting policy.

A company source said the provisions also reflected the fact that 10,000 more staff had taken voluntary redundancy than anticipated. The original £1.65bn restructuring programme unveiled three years ago planned for staff cuts of some 25,000; but in recent months more employees have left British Gas as morale in the company slumped.

Last night analysts were still coming to terms with the write-offs and attempting to put a value on Centrica and the remaining half of the business, which will be renamed "BG plc". One said: "These provisions are much bigger than we'd expected. We had assumed there would be further write-offs of around £200m or £300m but not on this scale." British Gas also dampened speculation yesterday of further imminent deals to renegotiate take-or-pay contracts. Following the agreements with BP and Mobil, representing around 20 per cent of the total liabilities, analysts had been expecting similar arrangements with Shell and other leading North Sea oil producers.

However, Mr Gardner said

one of his first tasks after the demerger of Centrica, to be completed on 17 February, would be to review the question of further take-or-pay deals.

Centrica, which will own British Gas's vast Morecambe Bay gas fields, takes over the liabilities to buy gas at around 19p a therm, much higher than current market prices of 15p a therm.

However in recent months gas prices on the spot markets have been rising, alleviating some of the pain.

Mr Gardner explained: "We've progressed with a number of other deals but now I want to pause for a while. One parameter is the rise in the gas price, though clearly we still have a problem."

The demerger documents confirmed that Richard Giordano, British Gas chairman, will step down earlier than expected as chairman of Centrica at the end of June and will be replaced by Sir Michael Perry, former head of Unilever, the Anglo Dutch foods and detergents group.

Following his departure, Mr Giordano's salary of £450,000, unchanged since his arrival at British Gas in 1994, would be halved, reflecting his diminished role as non-executive chairman of BG.

Under the demerger, existing British Gas shareholders will receive one Centrica share for every share they already own.



Mary Walz: 'Working with the SFA has been arduous and protracted. I'm glad it's over'

## Walz escapes fine over Barings collapse but must pay £5,000 costs

Jill Treanor  
Banking Correspondent

Mary Walz, the former Barings executive, has been reprimanded by the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) and ordered to pay £5,000 towards the regulator's costs. However, she has escaped a fine and has not been banned from working in the City.

Ms Walz avoided taking her case to a tribunal by agreeing last year to settle one charge brought by the SFA. Publication of the settlement details was delayed while the SFA waited to

discover if Ron Baker, her boss at Barings, would appeal a tribunal decision against him.

"Working with the SFA has been arduous and protracted and I'm glad it's finally over," Ms Walz said yesterday. An industrial tribunal refused to grant her the £500,000 bonus she was awarded just hours before Barings collapsed in 1995.

The SFA has banned other Barings executives, including Peter Norris, the former chief executive of the bank, from working in the City. It intends to press on with two remaining tribunals in the Barings affair

against Ian Hopkins and James Bax.

However, the SFA has failed to discipline the former chairman, Peter Baring, and his deputy, Andrew Tuckey.

The SFA said Ms Walz accepted that between December 1994 and February 1995 she had failed to act with due skill, care and diligence.

"She did not properly monitor the proprietary trading activity known as the switching business in that she did not appreciate some alerting factors that occurred during this period," the SFA said.

## BA hits back over rivals' link-up claims

Chris Godsmark  
Business Correspondent

British Airways and American Airlines yesterday launched a vigorous defence of their proposed alliance, hitting back at rival carriers' claims that it would create an unprecedented monopoly on some of the most lucrative transatlantic routes.

The two airlines were filing their joint application to the US Department of Transportation requesting formal approval for the alliance, which would give them some 60 per cent of flights between the UK and the US.

The link-up, which involves pooling revenues, timetables and facilities, depends on the successful outcome of "open skies" talks between the two governments aimed at liberalising access to Heathrow Airport. Negotiations are due to restart in three weeks' time.

British Airways insisted it was confident it would get the alliance approved by UK competition authorities. The Office of Fair Trading has given the deal its provisional approval on condition that the partners give up 168 lucrative runway slots at Heathrow. However, rival airlines have attacked the conditions as far too lenient. They would still leave British Airways and American with some 3,000 slots at the airport.

The alliance partners also submitted their response yesterday to the OFT report, claiming the conditions recommended were "excessive". But David Holmes, BA's director of regulatory affairs, told a news conference in Washington

that the company was prepared to agree to give up some of its slots, but only on condition that it was compensated for the loss at a fair market value.

He continued: "I won't disguise the fact that the regulatory process in the UK has taken longer than expected. However, there are no competition problems that cannot be solved by BA agreeing to undertakings."

Rivals have stepped up their campaign against the alliance in their own submissions to the OFT, claiming that British Airways' plan to sell the slots would give the company a huge "war chest" which it would use to put other carriers out of business. Experts have estimated the 168 slots at Heathrow, equivalent to 12 round-trips a day, would net £180m.

The whole issue of slot trading has become more confused this week after news emerged that the European Commission has concluded that the practice is illegal under EC rules. The admission by sources close to Neil Kinnock, the transport commissioner, threatens to undermine British Airways' negotiating position. The EC is still investigating the alliance and has insisted that it needs European approval before it can operate.

Yesterday, a spokesman for American said the alliance would be the spur to a "dramatic" increase in competition in the UK-US airline market as new carriers gained access to Heathrow. "We are flabbergasted by constant repetition of this nonsense about a monopoly," he said.

### IN BRIEF

• Northern Rock, the building society planning a £1bn stock market flotation in the autumn, plans to spend up to £40m expanding its nursing home activities. The deal involves Kingsclear Homes, a private, Midlands-based operator with 23 nursing homes and 1,250 beds. It will add to the 15 homes and 720 beds already run by Northern Rock's Regency Care Homes subsidiary. Northern Rock is one of four building societies planning to abandon its mutual status and convert to a bank this year, a process which will mean shares being handed out to an estimated 15 million people.

• The Spanish government yesterday gave the green light for the privatisation of the remaining 21 per cent stake in the former state-owned communications giant Telefonica in Spain's biggest privatisation operation to date, writes Elizabeth Nash in Madrid. Nearly 200 million shares are to be offered for public sale on 20 January, twice the amount already on the market. The Spanish stock market has soared to record levels in recent days in anticipation of the bonanza, with double the usual volume of share dealing recorded on Thursday. The government yesterday approved measures intended to guarantee that more than half the forthcoming packet of shares remains in Spanish hands.

• At least two South Korean companies said they were talking with Airbus Industrie about joining its jumbo jet project aimed at breaking Boeing's monopoly in large airliners. Samsung Aerospace Industries and Korean Air said they and several other companies were involved in talks about an aircraft capable of carrying at least 550 passengers. Airbus confirmed it was holding talks with South Korean companies.

• Volkswagen's "defeat" at the hands of General Motors was greeted with euphoria on the Frankfurt stock exchange yesterday, propelling the German company's shares to an all-time high. VW shares hit DM725 in the morning before closing at DM708.

• David Morris, chairman of Northern Electric, which lost its independence over Christmas in a bitter £782m hostile takeover battle, yesterday urged any outstanding investors in the company to accept the 650p-a-share all-cash offer from US-controlled CE Electric. CE has received acceptances from shareholders speaking for 79.8 per cent of the company.

• Grundig has appointed Credit Suisse First Boston to help it find new partners and investors following the decision by Dutch electronic giant Philips to cut links with the German consumer electronics group. Grundig said Philips' decision to restrict its role as a passive minority shareholder was surprising.

• Loedex, the Midlands-based engineering group, plans to move from a full listing to the junior Alternative Investment Market. The company also said it would seek shareholder approval to buy back up to 10 per cent of the issued share capital. The proposed transfer is subject to shareholder approval at an extraordinary general meeting to be held on 4 February.

## Spot winners in £15bn society bonanza

### THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Windfall winners	
Halifax	390-450p
Dixons	496p
Kingsfisher	639.5p
MFI	190.5p
Airtours	823.5p
Reg Vardy	315.5p

Anyone who thinks the economy is not set for a buoyant 1997, driven by strong consumer spending, has not reckoned with the £15bn to be released from the Woolwich and Halifax building society flotations, details of which emerged this week.

Together with the proposed flotations of Norwich Union, Alliance & Leicester and Northern Rock, an estimated £25bn of money that people had not previously counted on will be burning a hole in consumers' pockets.

This represents an unprecedented boost to the national economy, with very uncertain consequences. They are uncertain because nobody knows how much of those windfalls will be squandered away and how much blown in an orgy of "what the hell" consumerism. The balance will depend on how good people feel about their finances generally, but against a backdrop of rising house prices, low interest rates and falling unemployment it would be surprising if an awful lot of the cash were not splurged.

Another important factor is likely to be the size of the payouts from Woolwich and Halifax. With payouts averaging about £1,300, many people will take the view that such an amount is hardly going to transform their personal fund but will buy a very nice holiday, or that multi-media PC they've been wanting and aching about for the past year or so. It might make a good down-payment for

that low-finance Ford Mondeo they've seen in the garage window or replace that tired sofa.

For those lucky enough to be benefiting from this money-for-nothing handout, the key question is when, if at all, to cash in their chips and take part in the consumer blow-out. For everyone else, the more relevant question is how to benefit at one remove from all that spending.

For new Halifax shareholders, the best advice would be to hold onto the shares at least for the first few weeks or months following the transfer of shares. That is because, unusually for a company worth £12bn on the stock market, the big investing institutions will be heavily underweight with all the shares in the hands of the general public. There will be an unseemly scramble to buy a suitable weighting in the stock, and unless everyone rushes for an early exit, the share price will be bid up sharply. Holding onto Abbey National shares paid handsome dividends after that first conversion.

For everyone else, attention should focus on which sectors and companies are likely to be the biggest beneficiaries of the largess. To answer that question we have drawn up a portfolio of

likely building society bonanza winners.

Dixons said earlier this week that computers had been one of its best-selling items and there is no reason to suppose that trend is going to reverse this year. As owner of PC World, one of the leading computer superstores, Dixons should do well.

A £1,300 payout will go a long way to replacing a household washing machine and dishwasher, so expect sales of white goods to be strong at Comet, which is owned by B&Q to Woolworth's group Kingsfisher. Furniture should sell well at MFI where profits are on a strong recovery track.

Our other hunch is that Halifax and Woolwich shares will be sold to pay for holidays and new cars. In these sectors we are

going for quality, even if the shares already discount much of the good news. Airtours is the best of the bunch in a recovering holiday industry and Reg Vardy looks good value after strong profits growth this week.

### Brokers miss the party

Insurance brokers have completely missed the stock market party of the last few years. One hundred pounds invested five years ago in the sub-sector, which ranges from the mighty Sedgwick to the lowly PWS, would now be worth something like £54.

The reasons for this dismal performance are not hard to

find. Normally a highly cyclical industry, insurance rates have been weakening almost continuously since the early 1990s. But whereas in a normal cycle weaker players would eventually be driven out, there has been less evidence of capacity cuts this time and the outlook is for soft rates to continue for the foreseeable future.

It was therefore with considerable relief that the market heard the news last month that Lloyd Thompson and JIB, two of the largest second-line brokers, had agreed to merge to create Jardine Lloyd Thompson. Expectations that that would be part of a consolidation trend appeared to be confirmed yesterday when two of the smaller players, Lowndes Lambert and Fenchurch, were forced to admit they were in merger talks after the latter's shares started to move earlier this week. Fenchurch, which traded at 49p at the beginning of the week, added a further 8.5p to 66.5p, while Lowndes put on 7p to 110p on the news.

Any merger is likely to be defensive, given that growth is more likely to come from cost-cutting and market share gains than any expansion of the top line. Tony Silverman, insurance analyst at NatWest Securities, expects market growth to be in the "low single-digit" per cent over the next few years. He estimates there could be scope to

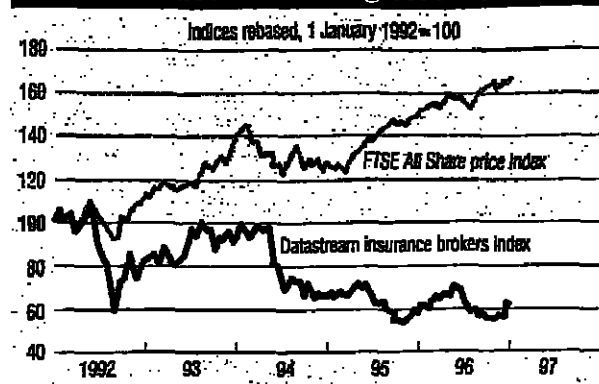
shave at least 5 per cent from the combined costs of the two brokers, put at around £115m.

Beyond that, though, Fenchurch also looks in need of Lowndes' management skills. Revenue and operating profits have grown sluggishly since 1991 and last year was torrid, with a profits warning and the defection of a team of South American specialists in February followed by a halved final dividend and the loss of a chunk of business in the autumn.

The logic behind the JLT merger looks more soundly based. Lloyd Thompson's highly successful London market-based business should fit nicely with Jardine's extensive foreign network and its strong links with the Far East, one of the few insurance markets still showing reasonable growth.

JLT, when it finally emerges, should be a reasonable bet for the long term, but punters hoping to catch the next wave of consolidation could take a look at Nelson Hurst, a group with the sort of international coverage that might attract a bid from a more London-orientated broker. Mr Silverman also points to the potential for slimming down overhangs at CE Heath, where costs have been traditionally higher than average. The shares, unchanged at 96p, stand on a forward rating of under 8. But the overall sector is likely to continue to be dull, particularly in view of the impact of the higher pound on overseas earnings.

### Insurance brokers lag stock market





# Oil majors give erratic New York the cold shoulder

**Thomas' ch**  
**erase all**



## sport

# Veteran's verve a vibrant test for McCullough

Harry Mullan, in Boston, assesses the fighting Irishman's world title challenge

Rafael Mendoza, who has guided the World Boxing Council super-bantamweight champion, Daniel Zaragoza, throughout the 39-year-old's extraordinary career, keeps assuring us that each fight will be his last. "Before every fight," he says, "I tell him: 'This would be a good fight to go out on' but every time around about the eighth or ninth round, he will say: 'Rafael, I have a new plan. I'm going to fight one more time.'"

The consensus of opinion among the boxing fraternity gathered in Boston for Zaragoza's 20th world title fight tonight against Ireland's Wayne McCullough is that this "one more" will be one too many, that the still substantial remnants of the skill which has made Zaragoza a four-times world champion will not be enough to hold off an eager and ambitious 26-year-old who has already won one championship, the World Boxing Council bantamweight belt, and now fancies his chances of a second.

"He's tough," McCullough acknowledges laconically, "but I'm pretty tough too." He would deny it of course, but much of his positive thinking probably derives from Zaragoza's propensity to bleed, usually during the referee's instructions. The champion's face is like a map of the rivers of the world. He is a strange looking individual, with the wizened and lined face of a much-abused garden gnome transplanted on to the body of an athlete.

Zaragoza himself offers the best analysis of the qualities which have carried him through such a long career, covering one reign as WBC bantamweight champion and three as super-bantamweight king. "I may not be the best fighter in the world," he says, "but I am the most stubborn." He may bleed copiously in every fight, but is immensely reassured by the presence here of the WBC president, Jose Sulaiman, who has chosen to come to Boston

rather than travel to Nashville where the much higher-profile WBC light-middleweight champion, Terry Norris, defends his title tonight, hours before Zaragoza enters the ring at the Hynes Convention Center. It would require naivety on a staggering scale to believe that Sulaiman, a Mexican, has not had a quiet word with tonight's referee about the implications of being runnicked into a hasty stoppage when his compatriot starts to bleed.

However, tonight's contest will not, I believe, be decided by skulduggery or conspiracy. Zaragoza is a fighter of genuine and undisputed quality, who has never once boxed in a title fight in his homeland but has still managed to win 12 and draw three of his 19 world title fights in places as scattered as Korea, Italy, America, Japan and France. That takes chutzpah and courage, not luck, and McCullough is right to accord the battle-scarred veteran such deep respect.

McCullough has built his career (20 fights, 20 wins) on relentless aggression and a punch rate which would have made Joe Frazier, himself a protégé of McCullough's trainer, Mike Fitch, seem workshy. The fiery Irishman is likely to be too young and fresh for the veteran, particularly now that he is freed from the struggle of making the bantamweight limit of 118lbs at which, until the first bell sounds tonight, he still holds the WBC championship. "Wayne is tough early and he's tough late," says assistant trainer Thor Torrence in a vivid description of his man's style of pressure-fighting.

Even great champions – and Zaragoza surely deserves that description – get old sometime, and tonight should be his turn. "It's the passing of the baton," says McCullough's manager, Matt Tinley. "This is a farewell party for Zaragoza."

Nice scenario, but has anyone told Daniel?

## Akinwande between Welch and the elite

Not so long ago the prospect of Henry Akinwande fighting Scott Welch would hardly have been a compelling attraction at the end of Brighton pier. Despite his fine technical ability, Akinwande was seen as dull and unfashionable while Welch was remembered mainly for being battered to a five-round defeat by the ponderous James Oye-bola 30 months ago.

Now Welch stands just one major victory away from becoming a white world heavyweight champion, attaining membership of an exclusive club and a guaranteed entry to the ranks of the big-time. Welch would suddenly be known in America fight circles if he overcomes the 6ft 7in Akinwande in the all-British showdown for the World Boxing Organisation title at the Nashville Arena today.

A Welch win would hardly likely be a triumph for science. Akinwande's telegraphic arms and rough him up inside,

tactics that are likely to give the referee a busy night.

Welch believes he is a genuine contender for a world crown, and his association with the trainer Jim McDermott has enhanced his stamina and technique.

At a pre-fight press conference Welch managed to wind up Akinwande to the extent that the pair had to be pulled apart. The Florida-based, London-born Akinwande will be making the second defence of the title he won by knocking out Jeremy Williams in June. He then dismantled the Russian Alexander Zolkin in November.

Akinwande is the official leading contender to meet the winner of next month's Lennox Lewis-Oliver McCall World Boxing Council title clash with-in 90 days.

A cash row has flared between rival promoters, Dan Duva and Don King, regarding that fight. King is demanding a letter of credit guaranteeing McCall's purse of \$3m (£1.8m) plus training expenses of \$200,000.



The view from a Harlequins hospitality box in the new £5m stand at The Stoop Memorial Ground in Twickenham

Photograph: David Ashdown

# Harlequins thrive on their sales pitch

If the Rugby Football Union ever decides to place the running of the English game in the hands of a single, all-powerful supremo, it might do worse than consider the talents of Andrew Lloyd Webber. Professionalism may be less than a year old but the *Courage League* is already beginning to resemble a West End show. Gary Glitter soundtracks, Roy Orbison love songs, the Proclaimers and uptempo troupes of scantly clad dancing girls have all played their part in the wild, wacky and often excruciating world of pre-match entertainment.

Had the cold snap not accounted for last month's match between Saracens and Orrell, Francois Pienaar would have run out at Einfeld in the company of a band of Zulu warriors. Having already attended a press conference in the chaotic surroundings of a virtual reality computerdom in Leicester Square, South Africa's World Cup-winning captain must be feeling more like Indiana

Jones than a blind-side flanker. Yet beneath the obsession with the puerile, some serious money-making is going on in the commercial departments of England's leading clubs. Leicester, for instance, report record takings in their club shop while Wasp's learning fast under the guidance of their entrepreneurial backer, Chris Hewitt, are beginning to stand on their own two feet in the market place as well as on the pitch.

Ironically, however, the most rapid advance towards the 21st century is being made by the most traditional of all English clubs, Harlequins, bankrolled by Japanese money and bolstered by its close connections with both Twickenham and the City, are so far ahead of the game in terms of infrastructure, ideas and business awareness that if they could replicate their off-field performance on the pitch, they would win this year's League and Cup double with one eye shut.

"We are run absolutely like a business," says Robert Catch-

Chris Hewitt looks at the *Courage* club doing the business off the field

er, the club's marketing executive, who oversees a full-time staff of seven at The Stoop Memorial Ground.

"We have a product to sell and a business plan in place to make sure we sell it. In the old days, Quins took the attitude that it was a privilege for people to do business with them. Now the boot is on the other foot; we get out there and present ourselves to potential clients, pitching for custom like an advertising agency."

That naked but hugely successful commercial approach is reflected in virtually every aspect of the club and with Catcher anticipating a £3m profit from marketing activities this year, Quins are leaving all but the most successful Premiership football clubs with their faces in the dirt.

That £3m estimate does not include gate money; neither

does it include cash generated by corporate hospitality or restaurant and bar facilities soon to be available at The Stoop's new £5m stand, which will pay for itself inside seven years. "We finished the stand to hotel standard and when it becomes fully operational in March, we will have restaurant space for 1,000 people and bar space for 2,000," Catcher says. "Most of the use will be non-rugby; our proximity to Heathrow and the scarcity of suitable venues in South-west London make us a viable alternative for companies hosting conferences and product launches. I only wish the full range of facilities had been available from the start of the season, because it's a massive asset."

On the other side of the pitch, the Quins shop leads the way in rugby merchandising. "The famous Quins shirt is the

biggest-selling club jersey in the world – in fact, it may well be the biggest shirt. Because we now believe it has overtaken the Welsh national jersey, which always used to be the market leader. It is perceived by women in particular to be a fashion garment and because of rugby's increased exposure this season, our manufacturers are now struggling to cope with demand. We're out of stock here; the interest has been fantastic."

The benefit of all this is felt first and foremost by the director of rugby, Dick Best, and his coaching staff. Best is secure in the knowledge that he can pursue any player in the world with a chequebook the size of the new stand. It is no coincidence that the great New Zealand flanker, Michael Jones, and his long-time back row colleague from Auckland, Zinzan Brooke, are both keen to play out their careers at Quins. They will be free to move when their international contracts expire after this autumn's All Black tour of England and

while their joint asking price of £800,000 for two years puts them beyond the majority of domestic sides, Quins can shoulder the burden with relative ease. With that sort of spending power, Quins believe they can buy success and clearly intend to try. It is not good news for the England selectors, who already regard The Stoop as a wasted trip because more than half of the current line-up is foreign. By the middle of next season, the Londoners may be fielding a side with only three or four English-qualified players.

Does that worry anyone at The Stoop? Hardly. Little more than a decade ago, Quins were yesterday's men; powerful rivals – Leicester, Bath, Bristol and Gloucester – had left the old school tie brigade light years behind and were setting new standards in every phase of the game. Now, the wheel has come full circle. Money talks louder than ever and the City slickers from Twickenham are beginning to shout at the tops of their voices.

# Thomas' chance to erase all doubts

Arwel Thomas is ready to take the biggest opportunity of his career against the United States at Cardiff Arms Park today and make Wales' famous outside-half jersey his own.

But, having stolen the position ahead of his rivals, Jonathan Davies and Neil Jenkins, for this season's Five Nations Championship, Swansea's exciting young player intends to leave them trailing.

There are huge pressures attached to this job, the 22-year-old admitted. "You cannot afford to make it a burden though, because nothing will work." Thomas, whose six previous caps were scattered throughout Wales' 12 internationals last year, added: "This time, I really intend holding on to my place. Physically, I am a little bit bigger and I've certainly gained some extra pace, but the most important thing is experience and the belief that I can now handle being the Welsh fly-half."

The Wales coach, Kevin Bowring, clearly thinks so as well. "No matter how frustrating Arwel can be, when he plays, he

brings out the best in our three-quarter line," Bowring said.

Bowring's latest team selection probably will not be his definitive version for the Five Nations opener against Scotland in Edinburgh on Saturday week.

Jonathan Humphreys, the suspended skipper, is expected to return after sitting out the US match, while fit-again flanker Dale McIntosh could also challenge if a new-look back row combination of Steve Williams, Scott Quinnell and Colin Charvis does not function.

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# sport

**AUSTRALIAN OPEN:** Chanda Rubin made her breakthrough in Melbourne last year. John Roberts tracks her comeback

## Marathon woman makes return to Grand Slam stage

Devotees will be aware that the venue of next week's Australian Open, Flinders Park, has been renamed Melbourne Park, and that if Chanda Rubin is allowed to park she is not readily removed.

Having built a reputation as the marathon woman of tennis, the petite American had the misfortune to miss the last three Grand Slam tournaments, the French, Wimbledon and United States championships, because of injury.

The problem appears to have been cured by surgery to remove the hook of the hamate bone from Rubin's right hand, and the delightful 20-year-old is preparing to outstay her opponents, though not her welcome.

Australia is her favourite place to visit, not only for the usual reasons ("its beauty and friendly people") but also because her debut in Melbourne a year ago coincided with her first Grand Slam title as a senior player, albeit the women's doubles, with Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

It was the first tournament the pair had played together, and the wonder of their triumph was that the Spaniard could bear the sight of her partner after what occurred in the singles quarter-finals.

The organisers might have considered asking Rubin and Sanchez Vicario if they were willing to take out a mortgage on the court. Their singles duel, as enthralling as it was lengthy, ate into the night for three hours and 33 minutes – the concluding set taking two hours and 22 minutes – until Sanchez Vicario, the great retriever, was able to retrieve no more.

Rubin, the No 13 seed, hit a winning volley on her sixth match point to defeat the third-seeded Sanchez Vicario, 6-4, 2-6, 16-14, and advance to her first Grand Slam semi-final and to No 10 in the world rankings.

While digesting that, Rubin was informed that she had won the longest women's match ever played at the Australian Open.

Big deal. Rubin's second round victory at Wimbledon in 1995 against the Canadian Patricia Hy-Boulais, 7-6, 6-7, 17-15, stands as the longest women's singles match in Grand Slam history in terms of time (three hours and 45 minutes), the total number of games (58), and the number of games in a set (32). "In the last set I knew I just wanted to win, but I couldn't remember why," Rubin said. She added, "You push yourself and it allows you

to find out where your limits are, if there are limits."

Three weeks prior to that, Rubin had lured the Czech Jana Novotna into a classic capitulation in the third round of the French Open by fighting off nine match points and a third set deficit of 0-5, 0-40.

Last January, in addition to sharing the Australian Open doubles prize with Sanchez Vicario, Rubin had the distinction of being the only player to take a set off Monica Seles during the singles championship. But that was scant consolation for failing to secure a place in the final.

Although Rubin had not played Seles before, her aimlessness troubled the top seed sufficiently for her to take the opening set of the semi-final on a tie-break (7-2), and to recover

**'You push yourself and it allows you to find out where your limits are, if there are limits'**

from a severe letdown in the second set (1-6) to gain the initiative in the third.

Rubin led 4-1, had points to break for 5-1, and served for the match at 5-3. At 30-15, Rubin went for an ace and missed. She also went for an ace on the second serve. The gamble failed. Rubin salvaged only two more points as Seles won 6-7, 6-1, 7-5.

Overcoming her disappointment, Rubin continued to prosper. In March she qualified for the Million Dollar Club in prize-money after reaching the quarter-finals at Indian Wells, California, where she won the doubles with Brenda Schultz-McCarthy, and raised her world ranking to No 6 by reaching the singles final at the Lipton Championships in Florida.

Rubin's fifth Tour final ended in defeat – as did the previous four, at Phoenix, Chicago, Los Angeles and Eastbourne – but on this occasion the adversary was Steffi Graf, who has a knack of confining their contests to a sprint distance.

"For some reason, Chanda hasn't played the best against me," said Graf, who has won their four matches in straight sets, with the American accu-

mulating a total of only 14 games. "Steffi and Monica are both great players," Rubin said, "but Steffi's game definitely presents more problems for me."

One reason is that Rubin makes more mistakes when playing Graf. In losing the Lipton final, 6-1, 6-3, Rubin committed 26 unforced errors, five of them double-faults – although it transpired that her right hand had been damaged during the course of the tournament.

Rubin was able to make only one further appearance between April and November, the injury forcing her to retire after one set of a tournament in June. She underwent surgery in September, and reached the quarter-finals of the second event of her comeback, in Philadelphia, defeating the eighth-ranked Iva Majoli, of Croatia.

While Rubin inevitably experienced moments of frustration during the lengthy lay-off, her rehabilitation was generally hassle-free, in accord with the gradual nature of her progress from the junior ranks.

With Rubin, there is not a hint of parental pressure to do anything other than enjoy her career. Her father Edward is a district judge in Lafayette, Louisiana, her mother Bernadette is a retired teacher.

Chanda, along with her older sister, La Shon, and younger brother, Edward, grew up with a tennis court and a swimming pool at home. "We never had a need for her to support us," her mother says. "There was no pressure for us to rush her."

Nor is over-emphasis placed on the family's African-American roots. "We don't want to stand out from everybody else," Bernadette says. "We just want to be like everyone else, and we are, if you look past our colour."

The tennis court was Bernadette's idea. "When our house was built, I asked my husband to build a tennis court because I wanted to learn to play. He said, 'OK, I'll do that for you. But since I already know how to swim, I'm going to build a pool first.'"

It could be said that fear played a part in Chanda's gravitation to tennis as a five-year-old, but not in the usual sense. "I had fallen asleep in my house, and when I woke up, no one was around and I got kind of scared," she recalls. "Then it came to me. 'They are probably outside on the tennis court.' It was like, 'Wow, what a relief.' I remember walking out on



After missing three Grand Slams following surgery on her wrist, Chanda Rubin is hitting form again. Photograph: AP

the court and thinking it was a good place. Everyone was having a good time and I just wanted to be out there."

In comparison to some of her American predecessors, notably Tracy Austin, Andrea Jaeger and Jennifer Capriati, the gestation of Rubin's career was hype-free, even though she was ranked No 1 nationally at 12-and-under at the age of 11 and, at 12, was the top female US player aged 14-and-under.

That was when she first told her mother, "I wanna go pro," and received a very smile in response. "I think she had heard that phrase from a couple of the high school boys, who were talking about football and basketball," Bernadette says. "We really didn't think she would stick to that idea. But sure enough, that's what she wanted to do."

Rubin was 15 when she did

turn professional, at the 1991 US Open. "I knew that I was going to turn pro before going to college because it would have been just too long for me to wait," she says.

Although a finalist at her second tournament, in Phoenix, she nevertheless continued with her high school education before travelling on the tour full time. Indeed, she elected to miss the 1993 French Open in order to march with her graduating class at the Episcopal School of Acadia.

By then Rubin's all-court style had established her as a dangerous competitor, one capable of graduating from the Wimbledon junior singles title to the US Open fourth round in 1992. Endeavouring to maintain a healthy balance between professional tennis and life in general, Rubin has earned as much

respect for her work in the local and state community – conducting clinics, involving herself with a children's museum, the American Heart Association, Special Olympics causes and wheelchair tennis – as she has been shown for her performances on the court.

In 1995, she received the WTA Tour's Most Improved Player Award, and was named the USTA's female Athlete of the Year and became the first tennis player to be selected as the US Olympic Committee's Athlete of the Month. In recognition of this, her home town of Lafayette declared 12 September 1995, "Chanda Rubin Day".

The ITF News observed that "Chanda is making a habit of claiming her own day at the Grand Slam championships". She certainly did that at Flinders Park, as the National

Tennis Centre was known for nine years until the Victoria parliament had the name changed to Melbourne Park on the day after last year's tournament, in order to accentuate the city.

Matthew Flinders probably would have approved. After all, Flinders was the English navigator who insisted on calling the continent Australia after it had been named New Holland by the Dutch and New South Wales by Captain Cook.

What's in a name? Lafayette was a French general who became a hero of the American cause against the British. And Chanda? A reporter telephoned the family and asked where the name came from and if it was of African origin. "We found that very amusing," Bernadette says. "Chanda is an American Indian name, and I got it out of a baby book."

## Kafelnikov ruled out as injuries mount up

DERRICK WHITE

The world No 4, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, yesterday joined a growing casualty list of top seeds as injury ravaged the field before the start of the Australian Open.

Kafelnikov was forced to pull out with a broken hand, while doubts surrounded the fitness of his fellow seeds, Jim Courier and Thomas Enqvist.

Britain's No 1 Tim Henman, in tremendous form, will face home hero Mark Philippoussis in the opening round. Greg Rusedski must overcome the 14th seed Felix Mantilla of Spain.

The withdrawal of Kafelnikov removed a potential threat to the top-seeded world No 1 Pete Sampras, who was paired against a qualifier in yesterday's first-round draw. The defending champion Boris Becker was handed a tougher assignment against the improving young Spaniard Carlos Moya, who is ranked 28 in the world.

Becker, the sixth seed, lost in three sets against Moya at last year's Paris Open, their only previous meeting. "Carlos is not a typical Spanish clay court player because he is able to play on quicker surfaces, which is going to make it more dangerous," Becker said.

In the women's draw, the world No 1, top seed and overwhelming favourite, Steffi Graf, will play Janette Husárová of Slovakia in the first round. The Swiss teenager Martina Hingis, seeded fourth and regarded as the biggest threat to stop the German winning her fifth Australian Open, is in the opposite half of the draw, clearing the way for a possible final meeting.

Sampras and Becker were also kept apart in the draw and can only meet in the final on 26 January. If Sampras beats the qualifier and the next two matches go his way, as expected, his first seeded opponent should be the No 16, Alberto Berasategui of Spain, in the fourth round.

The former world No 1 Courier, the Australian Open champion in 1992 and 1993 and seeded No 11 this year, has a hamstring strain. The seventh seed Enqvist was struck down on Thursday with a badly infected blister on his right hand, and is also doubtful for the tournament. The Wimbledon champion, Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands, and the 1993 Wimbledon finalist, Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic, have already been forced out through injury.

Mark Fitchey, the 26-year-old Davis Cup player from Essex, beat Australia's Des Tyson 6-2, 6-3 in the second qualifying round. Nov Fitchey will meet another Australian, Leyton Hewitt, in the third qualifying round. If successful, Hewitt will qualify for the main event.

Andrew Richardson, the 22-year-old Lincolnshire left-hander, joined Petchey in the third qualifying round when he defeated Mexico's Alejandro Hernandez 6-3, 6-4, and will now meet Spain's Oscar Burrieza for a place in the first round.

Sam Smith, the British No 1, beat Daphne Van De Zande of Belgium 6-2, 6-7, 6-2 in the first round of the women's qualifying competition.

Australian Open draw, Sporting Digest, page 25

## Sampras squares up to Chang in final

Pete Sampras will be given a stern examination of his readiness for next week's Australian Open when he plays fellow American Michael Chang in the final of a warm-up exhibition event today.

Sampras, the top seed in the season's first Grand Slam in Melbourne, which starts on Monday, will try to prevent

Chang, second-seeded in the Open, from winning his third Colonial Classic title in a row.

Sampras, the world No 1, advanced without hitting a ball at Kooyong yesterday when the world No 4, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, was forced to withdraw because of a broken hand.

"Michael is a true test to see where I am at," Sampras said of

his meeting with the world No 2.

"He plays very well in Australia and we will see how it goes out there. It's not a Grand Slam final, so I want to make sure I'm hitting the ball well and feeling fit and ready to go on Monday."

Chang, who lost to Boris Becker in the Australian Open

final last January, beat the German on Thursday in the other semi-final.

A fractured bone in Kafelnikov's right hand has forced the Russian to pull out of the Open. The exhibition event has been badly affected by injuries, forcing the organisers to call in several replacements at short notice.

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**HYPERION**  
12.50 Perfect Pal 1.25 Slip Jig 1.55 Come Too  
Mamma's 2.30 Our Eddie 3.00 Lily Jacques 3.30  
Pedal to the Metal

**GOING Standard.**  
STALLS Inside, except 21 (outside).  
DRAW ADVANTAGE Inside track best for 6f.  
1st-4th, hand course (Bicycle track) 1st-4th.  
Course is short-east of town on B2028, Lingfield station (served by London Victoria) 1st-4th. ADVANTAGE: One enclosure 5f. CAR PARK: Club 5f; remainder free.

**SIS RACING CHANGES**  
BANKED FIRST TIME: Media Express (2.30), Ben Lacy (3.00), Code Red (3.30).  
VINTAGE IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: Slip Jig (1.25) won at Lingfield on Saturday.  
LONG-DISTANCE BURNING: Calchou (1.55) has been sent 270 miles by C. Fairhead from Middleham, North Yorkshire; Wedding Music (3.00) sent 270 miles by P. Haslam from Middleham, North Yorkshire; Come Too Mamma's (1.55) sent 268 miles by J. Berry from Coodenham, Lancashire.

**12.50 TYRONE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £4,900 added 1m 5f**

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## sport

# Orient's groundsman has no such luxuries: if he needs to water the Brisbane Road pitch he asks the local fire brigade to pop in

Kevin Keegan may have been feeling the pressure in recent weeks, but perhaps he should spare a thought for the groundsman who's been feeling under the weather ever since Britain's sporting calendar first fell hostage to the elements.

It's not just football which has suffered: the British Horseracing Board estimates that racecourses have lost around £3m of income. But it's ironic that football, which is so powerful as to dictate our heroes, our memories and our emotions, is still bought to its knees by the most basic element of all. Lady Luck may have a big part to play in football, but Mother Nature likes her say too.

Although several more weekends (not to mention the rest of the week) would be wiped out to make this the worst winter on record - that distinction belongs to 1963-64 when the

FA Cup third round wasn't completed until the end of March, delaying the final by a fortnight - this has been one hell of a winter of discontent. Not only has it given the lower division clubs a financial headache but it's caused further conflict between managers and referees. Wrexham's Cup tie with West Ham may have given Hugo Porfio his first experience of football on snow, but referee Mike Reed would have got an even frostier reception from Harry Redknapp had Porfio injured himself in the process.

There was a certain Irish logic in the words of the commentator who described the Racehorse Ground as being "insulated with a layer of snow". To paraphrase Brian Clough, if God had meant football to be played in the snow, he'd have bestowed more Arctic conditions on Britain than these.

But to criticise the pitch is not to underrate the efforts of the Wrexham groundsman who worked wonders in preparing it as best he could. As did the Old Trafford groundsman the following day - at least according to Martin Tyler on Sky Sports. It made Charlie Haslem chuckle. "No sour grapes," says Haslem, who has been Leyton Orient's groundsman for 21 years, "but he just had to set his feet up. And at Chelsea they've got 23 miles of under-soil heating."

Haslem has no such luxuries: no underground heating, no tractors, no sprinkling. If he needs to water the Brisbane Road pitch he asks the local fire brigade to pop in. Which just makes the fact that the O's went 10 years, from 1983-1993, without a single postponement, and have had just one November game called off this

## Olivia Blair



### ON SATURDAY

season - even more remarkable.

Haslem says his secret is "fairly dust... I have a drop of Scotch then breathe on it. Seriously, I work my damndest to get it ready. After every game we're straight out there to replace all the divots but we don't have

a roller: I'm the heaviest person who walks on it. We're lucky there's so much grass, it's formed a barrier against the frost. But our success counts against us 'cos they think we don't need better equipment."

Apparently the cold weather makes the grass "bleed", rendering it an anemic off-white colour. But Haslem maintains that people get hung up on the state of the grass. "You can have beautiful grass but a bumpy pitch, the priority is to get it flat. But it's horses for courses: at West Ham they have short grass 'cos they like to play it on the ground. I remember when Tommy Taylor was a player here, he liked the grass long, so I'd say: 'Here, Tommy, I've left the grass nice and long for you,' and he'd say 'Terrific'. Our striker Billy Jennings liked it short so I'd tell him it was short for him and he'd say: 'Terrific'."

Groundsmen are a strange breed: working all hours in all kinds of weather. Haslem hasn't had a break in five years, while Les Simmons, who goes out to grass this season after 30 years as Watford's head groundsman, has taken just five holidays in that time. If Simmons has his way, there'd be no football played on his pitch at all. He says it "breaks my heart when I see them kicking lumps out of my pitch."

By that Simmons means goalkeepers who mark their areas, of whom "that bloody Shilton" was the worst. According to Haslem, Shilton is still up to his old tricks at Orient, "but I let him off 'cos he's getting old." But don't expect Haslem and his fellow groundsman to show such leniency to the rest of the goalkeeping fraternity. The subject of keepers digging their heels in was top

of the agenda at a recent seminar organised by the Premier and Football League's Playing Surfaces Committee where it was decided that the only solution to the problem was to fine a manager £500 for his keeper's action. Apparently, marking the pitch is a bookable offence, but when referee Mike Reed claimed that "it usually happens when we're not looking", he incurred the wrath of over 100 irate groundsman.

They didn't exactly come at him waving pitchforks, but these groundsman certainly don't let the grass grow under their feet when provoked. Tom Porter, who lends the turf at Roker Park, was recently so incensed by a keeper digging trenches in his pitch that he rushed on brandishing a spade. "I told him he would make a better job of digging up the pitch - and he stopped straight away."

## Little warns of a Geordie backlash

Graham Fenton and Alan Shearer, Frank Clark and Steve Stone. There were times during Newcastle's bitter spring when it seemed that Geordies were queuing up, albeit with heavy hearts, to bar their way to the championship.

Now, as Newcastle face life after Kevin Keegan, first in line to rub salt in their wounds is a self-confessed boyhood fan, Brian Little. The Aston Villa manager was quick to warn against a backlash by the Newcastle players after this week's events, but his team may never have a better opportunity to break a sorry sequence.

In seven meetings during the Keegan era, Villa managed a solitary draw. Adding intrigue to a spicy plot, Newcastle's acting co-manager, Arthur Cox, performed the same role at Villa as long ago as 1968, while Tommy Johnson, Newcastle-born and bred, is in line for a recall.

There were some, this correspondent included, who argued that Keegan would have done better to spend the St James' millions on Gareth Southgate and Ugo Ehiogu than on Shearer. Southgate is set to return, in opposition to his England captain, for what Little termed "a massive game, one to sort the winners from the losers".

Keegan's departure prompted Roy Evans to suggest that for every 12 months in the job, a manager aged three years. While Liverpool still lead the table, their current form is as grey as the Evans barnet. Five

### Premiership games bring together old friends and foes. Phil Shaw reports

points out of 12 over Christmas was followed by Wednesday's exit from the Coca-Cola Cup at Middlesbrough.

Victory at home to West Ham, who have won one in 12, ought to be within the compass of any side challenging for the title. But with Liverpool's resources stretched and Harry Redknapp's selection options enhanced since a resiliant draw at Wrexham, another attritional afternoon is in prospect at Anfield.

If familiarity breeds contempt there should be no love lost at either Roker Park or White Hart Lane. Sunderland and Arsenal, who drew in the FA Cup at Highbury and replay on Wednesday, also meet today when it is again the Wearside's good fortune to avoid the suspended Ian Wright.

The wry amusement Wearside is bound to feel over the plight of the grieving Magpies ought to contribute to an upbeat atmosphere on the Premier-ship's last remaining terraces. Arsenal are past masters at deflating such moods, however, and David Seaman's return could have a significant impact on the title race.

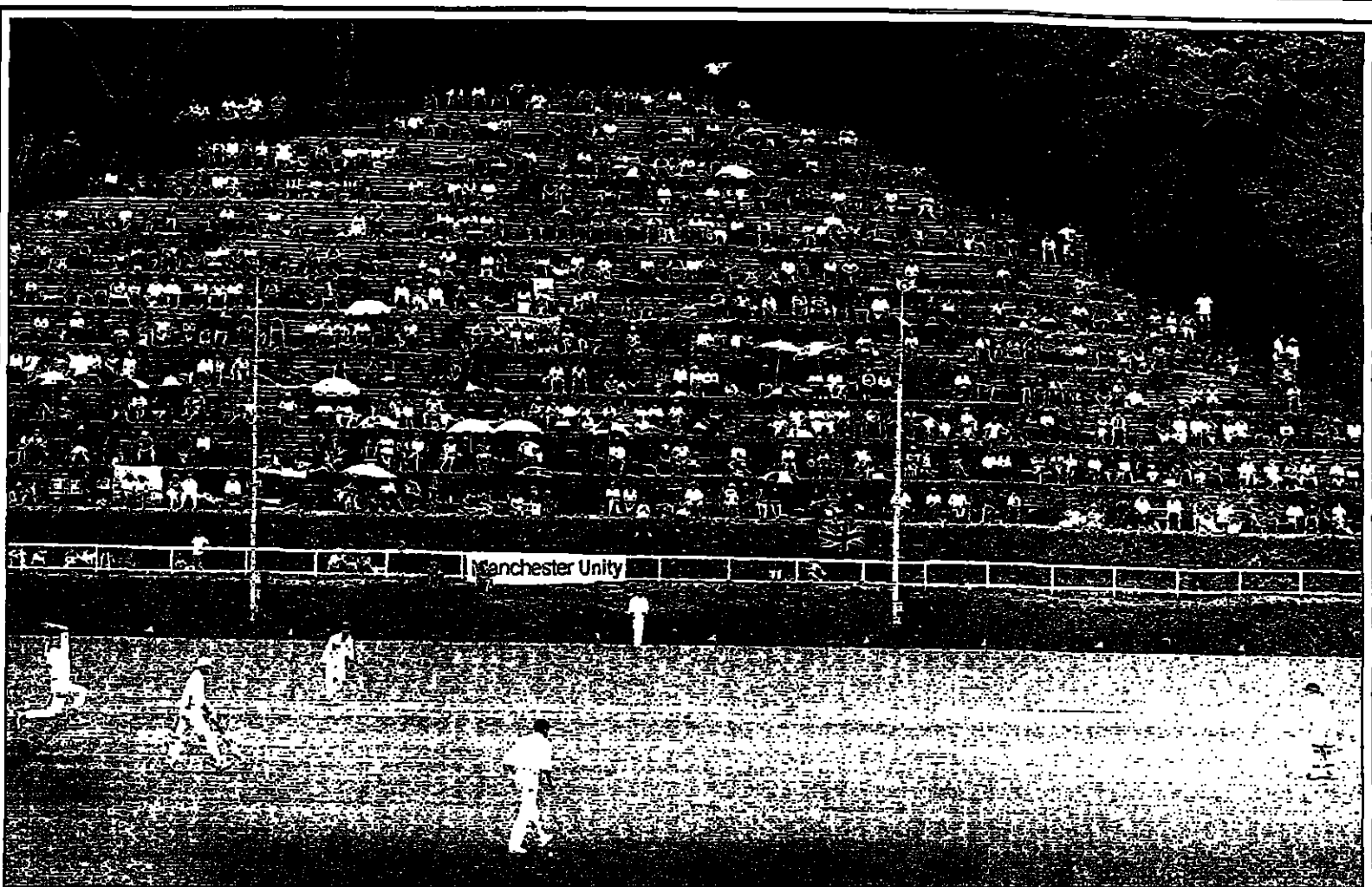
Tottenham and Manchester United also resume hostilities tomorrow, a week after United's FA Cup victory. By further

coincidence they also contested N17's first fixture of 1996, Spurs' 4-1 success being their only win in the 14 meetings. On that occasion Peter Schmeichel played half the game carrying an injury and William Frutkin made a second and last appearance for United.

This time it is Spurs who field an unfamiliar foreign centre-back, Switzerland's Ramon Vega. Welcome though the arrival of any international must be, Gerry Francis' critics may take some persuading that the heart of the defence was a priority, particularly after the arrival of John Scales. Nor, one suspects, would they have been enamoured of the manager's view that Vega was "in the Tony Adams mould".

Alex Ferguson is repeatedly told he lacks someone in the Steve Bruce mould, yet United have kept five successive clean sheets. Recent evidence, notably the continuing lack of what Peter Swales used to call repartee between Andy Cole and Eric Cantona, suggests that lack of striking power is more likely to cost them their title than defensive failings.

Talking of pressure in management, spare a thought for Stuart Pearce, caretaker incumbent at Nottingham Forest. The protracted takeover struggle at the City Ground prevents his spending 60p, let alone £60m, a situation which could lead to angry supporters' protests at the game with Chelsea. And unlike Keegan, Pearce also has to play.



Ronnie Irani bowling for England against a New Zealand Academy XI at New Plymouth yesterday. The match was rained off

Photograph: Allsport

## Indoor tournaments attract top players

### Hockey

BILL COLWILL

Sensibly, indoor hockey dominates the scene this weekend, with the preliminary rounds of the English Club Championship taking place at East Grinstead and in Worcester to find the last six for the National Finals at Crystal Palace on 7 February.

The defending champions Old Loughtonians, St Albans and the home side are likely to go through from East Grinstead although Reading, with Britain's goalkeeper Simon Mason on parade, could cause a surprise. At Worcester, the current outdoor leaders Cannock, with the high-scoring Bobby Crutchley in their squad, look the only certainties to make progress.

### Basketball

The enterprising Glasgow City Council's World Cities Indoor Championship today and tomorrow at Kelvin Hall is likely to be a sell-out with BBC Scotland cameras covering the final. With four national squads, including Scotland representing Glasgow, playing as part of the build-up for the European Cup in Liekeu next weekend, the competition is going to be fierce.

The Scottish champions Menzieshill, from Dundee, provide five of the Glasgow squad, including their captain, John Christie. Madrid, the Spanish representatives, include nine of their Olympic silver medal side and are the favourites for the final, probably against Glasgow, although Johannesburg could create a surprise.

## Leopards and Sharks face fixture pile-up

### Athletics

Sheffield Sharks and the Leopards, who meet in next weekend's National Cup Final, have to fit in three more games each before then as the demands of the Budweiser League and League Trophy gather pace, writes Richard Taylor.

Leopards must bounce back from a 17-point defeat against London Towers tonight when they face Thames Valley Tigers, who want the former Derby and Hemel American, Jason Siemon. Sheffield are away at Leicester City Riders, whose coach, Bob Doneviald, has stripped their veteran guard Gene Waldron of the captaincy after the club ended a run of seven defeats with victory at Crystal Palace.

## Criticised Radford backed by athletes

### Athletics

Peter Radford was given a vote of confidence yesterday by the British Athletics Association, who went against the tide of criticism of the governing body's executive chairman.

The head of the British Athletic Federation had come under increased pressure from some quarters since he sacked his public relations officer, Tony Ward. There have been hints that a motion of no confidence will be put down at the federation's annual meeting in March.

The newly formed athletes' body has supported Radford in his attempts to reshape the sport nationally. "It is so easy to throw stones," said Geoff Parsons, a full-time director of the association who with Black negotiated a power-sharing deal with Radford and the federation.

"These critics are fighting regional battles. We fully support what Peter and his professional staff are trying to do on behalf of British athletics as a whole."

The BAF has lost £750,000 in the last two years and their financial director, Steve Gledhill, is leaving for a job in industry. Mike Winch, a former international shot putter who sits on the federation's council, is among the critics. He said on Radio 5 Live: "The sport is falling to pieces. You see the quality of major meetings dropping, coaches and officials leaving and a reduction in the number of youngsters entering meetings."

Radford said: "From where I sit I don't see the bleakness."

## O'Donnell praised by Burns

Celtic face Hearts at Tynecastle today seeking a third victory in eight days, which would cut the gap on Rangers to eight points before Walter Smith's side face Aberdeen tomorrow.

Celtic have hit 11 goals without reply since losing to Rangers on 2 January and their manager, Tommy Burns, has hailed the contribution of midfielder Phil O'Donnell, who has returned after four months out with a calf injury.

"He has been sensational since he came back into the team five games ago," Burns said of O'Donnell, who was capped once by Scotland in 1993. "We always hoped he would show this sort of form once he got a regular run in the side. He hasn't looked the slightest bit tired and he has a tremendous lung capacity for getting up and down the pitch."

Burns is without Alan Stubbs, Brian O'Neill, Andreas Thom and Peter Grant as Celtic look for a first victory of the season over Hearts after three meetings. "The players deserve credit for the way they have lifted the fans since Ibrox - but that is our duty," Burns added.

The veteran Hearts striker John Robertson, who has a habit of scoring against Celtic, goes into the match two short of Jimmy Wardhaugh's Scottish League record of 206 goals for the Edinburgh club.

## Lehman in form at start of season

### Golf

Nick Faldo shot an opening round of 72 yesterday to tie six shots off the pace set by the Open champion, Tom Lehman, at the Mercedes Championships in Carlsbad, California.

Lehman's six-under-par 66 left him a stroke ahead of fellow Americans Paul Goydos and Jim Furyk, while at three-under were Fred Couples, Guy Boros and Justin Leonard.

Tiger Woods led a group of eight players on 70.

The Mercedes is the opening event in the USPGA Tour's season, with 32 winners of 1996 tournaments making up the field.

Lehman is playing as though there was no two-month gap since the last official event, the Tour Championship, which he won by six strokes. "I started slow and didn't feel really focused," he said, "but I made a bogey on the fifth hole and that got me back into the competitive mode and I made seven birdies in 13 holes."

"The key to the round was that I didn't expect too much of myself. I didn't practice that much during the off season. There was no pressure to play well, no huge expectations but once you start making a few putts the hole starts looking bigger and it all gets a bit easier."

## Lehman in form at start of season

### Golf

The former British Open champion, Ian Baker-Finch, failed to make the half-way cut in his comeback tournament yesterday after a second round of two-over-par 74 in the Victorian Open.

Victorian Open (Melbourne) Leading second-round scores: Ian Baker-Finch 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

Victorian Open (Melbourne) Leading second-round scores: Ian Baker-Finch 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360,











# Government claims war pension victory

Colin Brown  
Chief Political Correspondent

Leaders of the Royal British Legion were upset last night at claims they were ready to run up the white flag following a meeting with Peter Lilley, the Secretary of State for Social Security, over cuts in war pensions. The Department of Social Security caused deep annoyance at the legion headquarters af-

ter saying that they had presented no expert evidence to discredit the medical findings on which the cuts were based.

"They didn't disagree with the medical evidence or the legal advice we have taken and they have gone away to think about it. Our position remains unchanged. We have taken medical advice and we are legally bound to accept it," said a DSS spokesman.

The Royal British Legion officially described the meeting as "constructive" but privately one source said: "We had our own medical advice and it changed. We had to take it on the chin, but it would not be true to say we have run up the white flag. We will fight on."

The Independent has learned that the Royal British Legion had planned to challenge the medical evidence produced by

the Government by taking three medical experts to the meeting with Mr Lilley. However, before the meeting took place, one of the key witnesses changed his mind after consultations with the DSS officials. Yesterday he was in hospital, and out of reach of the Royal British Legion, which is waiting to have further discussion before deciding its next course of action. The Government, however,

appeared confident that it had won its battle with the legion, which threatened to blow up into a full scale row involving Tory backbenchers when it was first announced late last year.

The row arose when the Government was advised that deafness could no longer be attributed to gunfire once a serviceman or woman had left the armed services. That resulted in a change of rules backdated to

last March, stopping war disability payments of £35m a year.

Leaked papers, which were obtained by *The Independent*, showed that Mr Lilley had asked for four further measures to buy off the pensioners' lobby in talks with William Waldegrave, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, including making a payment for funeral expenses for war disabled pensioners costing £60,000 a year.

The disclosure that war pensioners were to lose their payments for deafness led to angry clashes in the Commons between Tony Blair, the Labour leader, and John Major, with Tory MPs protesting it was the worst performance they had seen from the Prime Minister in months.

The legion threatened to cause a humiliating climbdown in the cuts, with ex-service

groups warning that the Government would risk a defeat in the Commons. But the measure has been approved by order in council, and is unlikely to be stopped.

There was also a threat that the legion will seek judicial review but last night, Tory MPs were saying that they were "holding their fire" to see how the legion would react to the meeting with Mr Lilley.



## Daydream believers back to pay the alimony and school fees

Louise Jury

The faces are familiar, but the lyrics will have to be changed. All four members of the Monkees, were back together monkeying around for the first time in 30 years yesterday.

But with hair greying and laughter lines a little more pronounced, the members of the one-time "young generation" of the sixties are now all in their fifties.

"Hey, hey, we're the..." they joked with mock memory-loss.

Yet there are rewards as well as disadvantages to the ageing process. Where in 1966 the Monkees were the creations of television executives eager not for a pop group but a hit series for the young, today they are the ones in charge.

"We ARE the corporation," roared Peter Dinklage, the one with mop hair, with a giant grin. However, Davy Jones, the band's baby-faced lead singer, said it was not the money that mattered. "It's a case of enjoying what we do," he said. "The rewards are quite nice, it's important for alimony and kids' schools, but it's not the main motivation."

Billed as America's answer to The Beatles, they recorded 52 episodes of the television series but also sold 16 million albums, 7.5 million singles and notched up hits including "I'm a Believer", "Daydream Believer" and "Last Train to Clarksville", in a 39-month career.

It ended when Mike Nesmith paid \$160,000 to get out of the group. Though Davy Jones, Mickey Dolenz and Peter Tork have reunited several times since, he had always refused to join in. Until now.

He explained his change of heart yesterday, at a launch party at the Hard Rock Cafe, central London, saying simply: "I just wanted to get back to playing."

Jones, Dolenz and Tork have reformed several times since, and toured Britain together in 1989, but Nesmith always refused to join them until last summer when all four got together to record a new album,

**'We were all right to start with but now we're ferociously good'**

Justus, to be released in Britain on 27 January.

On 7 March, they embark on a 10-stop tour of the British Isles and Ireland which continues in America over the summer. And a television special is also to be made.

Jones, the only British-born member of the quartet, said that despite the height of their fame being 30 years past he was still recognised everywhere he went. "People still sing 'Hey, hey we're the Monkees' if they

see me in the street." Undaunted, he hoped the reunion would work out and that they would be seeing the press and public very many times.

Tork, jocularly claiming the fame and adulation were the hard part, promised they would be much better than before. "We were all right to start with, now we're ferociously good."

Dolenz added: "There are a lot of people who have tried to catch the lightning and the bottle again. But it's a very tough job to do and nobody has been successful."

Ward Sylvester, their manager and the producer of the original television series, thought the Monkees reminded people of a certain generation of a happy time in their lives. But as the series was always being repeated, it was still capturing new generations. "They're remarkably evergreen," he said.

The Monkees only ever played one concert in Britain during their heyday - at the Empire Pool, Wembley, in June, 1967 - but there is 300-strong fan club. Kirk White, 44, a London council worker and the club's president, loves everything about them. "The television show, the music - it brings back memories of the Sixties," he said yesterday, after nabbing a few autographs.

Another fan, Marcus Szabo, a postman from Chelmsford, Essex, was only a baby when the band split up. "They're just cool," he said.



Monkeying around: As they were in their 1960s heyday (above left), now back together and in charge of their material Photograph: Tony Buckingham

### The old men of rock who just can't hang up their guitars

#### The Eagles

Asked whether the Eagles would ever reform, Don Henley replied "When hell freezes over" - the name of their latest tour.

#### The Rolling Stones

The Stones are due to tour the US this year. The nucleus of the band remained since Brian Jones's death in 1969 until 1992, when Bill Wyman left to be replaced by Darryl Jones.

#### Yes

Despite numerous splits and reformations since 1968, Yes are to go on tour later this year with the line-up which brought the band its years of popularity.

#### Jethro Tull

Formed in Blackpool in 1967, Jethro Tull were performing right up to the summer of last year, when Ian Anderson collapsed in Sydney. The Scots-born singer and flute

player tore some cartilage when attempting a wild-man-of-rock leap off a stage in Lima, Peru, and his injuries led to a blood clot which threatened to block his heart.

#### The Everly Brothers

In the early Seventies, Phil Everly vowed never to perform with his brother Don again. But three years ago they made their peace on stage at the Royal Albert Hall.

## Spice Girls are animals says the designer who wore no knickers

Michael Streever

Fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, the one-time Queen of Punk whose eccentric clothes have stunned catwalk audiences all over the world, yesterday savaged the nearly packaged Spice Girls pop group as "animals" with no style.

Ms Westwood, who once declared "fashion is about sex", and dressed the Sex Pistols in bondage gear, said that she was morally outraged by the all-woman band, who are currently one of the most popular and influential groups in Britain and much of Europe.

**'Their dreadful clothes, dreadful look and no style'**

"Those Spice Girls have never had any education, they have never been brought up - they have just been allowed to grow up like animals," she said in a television interview. "Their dreadful clothes, their dreadful look and no style. They are just cultivating this attitude that you should push your way to the top - it doesn't matter if you have talent or not."

The designer, who helped to

shape the look of the punk generation of the late Seventies and early Eighties, said that she was appalled at the way the group were being targeted at girls as young as 10. "What people are marketing is disgusting behaviour as a lifestyle. People should be outraged by it. I'm morally outraged by it," she said.

Ms Westwood told presenter Carol Smillie on BBC1's chat show *Smillie's People*: "I call it child molestation. It's corruption. I really want to attack what I think is corrupting the youth."

While many parents of children obsessed with the Spice Girls may applaud Ms Westwood's outburst, some found her attack on today's generation of pop stars ironic. One pop writer observed: "One can hear the clanging of an elderly pot calling the kettle black."

Ms Westwood's partnership with punk-guru Malcolm McLaren made her a controversial figure as she designed clothes for, among others, Johnny Rotten and Adam Ant. Even when she moved into the mainstream and became more acceptable to the establishment, she retained her ability to shock - as when it became apparent that she had not been wearing knickers when she received her OBE from the Queen in 1992.

However, last summer Ms Westwood, nowadays a keen



Shocker: Westwood outside Buckingham Palace

reader of philosophy, was seriously tipped as a possible candidate for the prestigious position of designer for Dior - an honour eventually won by fellow Briton John Galiano.

The Spice Girls, whose singles "Wannabe", "Say You'll Be There", and "2 Become 1", have been number one in 30 countries and sold 7 million copies in all, recently grabbed the headlines when - in an interview in the *Spectator* magazine - they described Baroness

Thatcher as their spiritual predecessor. The women, aged 18 to 24, also dismissed John Major as a "boring pillock" - although they declared that they would never vote Labour.

Last night, the band were on holiday but a spokesman for their promoters, Virgin Records, was waspish. "We do not feel it necessary to get dragged into an argument with a foolish old woman about the greatest new musical talent in the world today."

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news

# Edinburgh nets £122m from M&S deal

Nigel Cope

Edinburgh residents are set to receive a late Christmas present from their local council following a major property deal with Marks & Spencer.

M&S announced yesterday that it is paying Edinburgh City Council £122m for the Gyle shopping centre at the western edge of the city. Though the

council has yet to decide how it will spend the money, it is possible that the proceeds will be used to finance a cut in the city's council tax bills. The sale would fund a £17 cut in the tax on band-D households. The council is due to discuss the matter next month.

Keith Geddes, the council leader, said: "It remains our priority to make sure that this

money is spent carefully to benefit the city and its residents for years to come and, vitally, to minimise the effect on our future revenue."

The sale could signal a new move by local councils to sell shopping centres and other property assets to fund the development of local amenities or cut council tax bills.

Under law, councils are

required to pay 25 per cent of all sale proceeds to reduce borrowings. The figure is set to rise to 50 per cent from 31 March. This is one reason why Edinburgh council was keen to complete the deal promptly.

The council admitted that a council tax windfall was possible but said that education and transport were two areas which have already been identified as

priorities. Another option being considered is to invest some of the Gyle proceeds in another shopping centre to sow the seeds of a future windfall.

Marjorie Kenny, a spokeswoman for the council, said there were also opportunities to help subsidise the many festivals which Edinburgh supports. She said the council could use part of the money to create a trust

fund which would help support events such as the Edinburgh Festival and the Science Festival.

She said the council would be keen to avoid developing amenities that would saddle the council with high future running costs.

Marks & Spencer said it was buying the Gyle centre to gain greater control over the future

expansion of its store which is the centre's anchor tenant. It said the move did not signal a fresh venture into property development. Though M&S did buy the Braehead centre in Glasgow where it also has a store, it later sold out to the property group Capital Shopping Centres.

Gyle shopping centre was completed in October 1993 and

attracts around 300,000 visitors every week. There are 65 tenants, with M&S and a Safeway supermarket the largest stores. In December, Edinburgh council had selected the Universities Superannuation Scheme as its preferred bidder to purchase the Gyle centre. However, the major tenants, M&S and Safeway, had a right to match the offer.

## Widow's attempt to get by upsets Sir Paul

Marianne Macdonald  
Arts Correspondent

Sir Paul McCartney yesterday defended his legal bid to stop the widow of his former road manager selling the original lyrics to one of the Beatles' biggest hits.

The newly knighted ex-Beatle tried to head off criticism after it emerged that he had prevented Lily Evans, 60, selling the paper on which he had scribbled the words for *With A Little Help From My Friends*.

She had hoped to raise £60,000 for her old age by selling the paper at Sotheby's, she told a BBC1 *Watchdog* investigation screened last night.

Her husband Mal had been The Beatles' road manager for many years and had been particularly close to McCartney. But he died in a shooting accident in Los Angeles 21 years ago, leaving her without a pension.

The Beatles sent her £5,000 at the time of his death which had been "most helpful", but she had worked as a secretary to support herself since and she could not understand why Sir Paul was stopping her gaining a nest-egg for her final years.

"I didn't know why he would want to do that. It wouldn't be for the money and he lets other people sell, so I don't know why he would want to stop me," she told the programme.

"If my husband had re-



Can they work it out? Lily Evans and her late husband Mal, who was The Beatles' road manager in the band's heyday (above) back in the Sixties. Main photograph: Daily Mirror

mained in his post office job I would have been better looked after."

Her son backed her, saying: "I think of everything Dad did for him. He'd be on 24 hours' notice and he'd do anything for Paul — he loved the guy. To do this to my mum now, I just don't think it is right. I don't think he

can have much of a conscience."

But in an angry statement Sir Paul said: "The programme is trying to make The Beatles out to be widow-baiters — nothing could be further from the truth."

"I would like to meet Mrs Evans and discuss this and come to some arrangement to see that she is taken care of and

that the lyrics are returned. They were never Mal's lyrics and therefore any relative of Mal's such as Mrs Evans does not have the right of ownership to these lyrics."

"To show how ridiculous this whole memorabilia market has become, there is someone in the USA who owns my own birth

certificate. How people can feel that that is right is beyond my comprehension."

"I am surprised that *Watchdog* is doing this report. I thought *Watchdog* was normally on the side of people who have been ripped off — not on the side of people who are doing the ripping off."

He added: "I don't wish to cause any trouble for Mrs Evans or for her children, whom I remember fondly, but I do feel strongly that these original manuscripts should be returned to their rightful owners."

Sir Paul's lawyers have taken out an injunction stopping Mrs Evans from selling the paper

until the case over ownership comes to court, which could take up to a year.

His spokesman, Geoff Baker, said Sir Paul had twice offered to help Mrs Evans if she was in hardship, but she had not taken him up on it. He was prepared to make her a "substantial" personal donation.

## Cancer link at nuclear waste plant

Liz Hunt  
Health Editor

Children who regularly play on a beach near the La Hague nuclear reprocessing plant in France are at greater risk of contracting leukaemia according to new research, reviving the debate about the safety of Britain's nuclear installations.

The study by French scientists suggests a causal link between environmental exposure to radiation and childhood leukaemia.

Children who visited beaches near the plant at least once a month showed almost a three-fold increase in the risk of developing the disease. Eating local seafood at least once a week was associated with a similarly increased risk of leukaemia. The children of mothers who regularly visited the beaches were also more likely to have the disease.

La Hague, on the Normandy coast, is one of only three nuclear reprocessing plants operating on an industrial scale in the world. The other two are Sellafield in Cumbria, and Dounreay on the north coast of Scotland.

Professor Jean-François Viel, of the department of public health, biostatistics and epidemiology unit in Besancon, France, investigated risk factors associated with childhood leukaemia in 27 cases in the La Hague area, and compared them with 192 controls of similar but healthy children.

While no link was found with either mothers' or fathers' occupational exposure to radiation — a hypothesis first put forward in 1990 — Professor Viel says in tomorrow's issue of the *British Medical Journal* that some lifestyle factors are associated with the development of the disease.

Professor Viel said: "On the whole, some convincing evidence is found of a causal role for environmental radiation exposure operating through recreational activities on beaches or consumption of fish and shellfish... but one explanation probably does not account for all cases, and other exposures such as radon may play some part, maybe even a synergistic one."

The public was first alerted to the existence of leukaemia clusters around nuclear plants in the early 1980s. The initial theory was that radioactive pollution in the environment was responsible, although the levels involved were not thought great enough to trigger the disease.

A study by Professor Martin Gardner then suggested that the children of men who worked at Sellafield were more likely to have leukaemia, following their fathers' exposure to radiation before the child was conceived. Another theory was that the influx of new populations to rural areas to work on the plants may be linked with the disease.

The new study supports the environmental hypothesis and calls for more research to investigate sources of contamination, including marine ecosystems.

## Branson says balloon design was flawed

Charles Arthur  
Science Editor

Richard Branson and his teammates revealed that they had been only a minute from death as their Virgin Challenger balloon plummeted towards the ground at 30mph early last Wednesday morning.

Yesterday, the three men declared themselves happy to be alive and back in Britain, saying they had had "the most fascinating, mixed 24 hours in our life".

The men were only saved from death by Alex Ritchie, 52, who clambered in the dark onto the capsule roof and detached two one-ton propane tanks to lighten the 11-ton balloon and halt the descent. At that stage they were so close to the ground they would have been killed even if they had jumped out.

Mr Branson denied that the crash in the Algerian desert meant the attempt to fly around the world non-stop had been a failure. "It's not that important what we are trying to do," he said. "What matters in the end is that we're still alive. We find these challenges irresistible, but it's great to be home."

He again said that he would have to think carefully before trying the exploit again. Per

Lindstrand, a teammate and the balloon's designer, commented: "Each time I have flown with Richard, he has landed and sworn he will never do it again — then changed his mind."

They blamed the crash on a fundamental design flaw in the huge balloon which meant it could not keep flying as the temperature fell at night.

Mr Ritchie struck a modest note, saying: "Maybe it was just as well it was dark, I couldn't see the ground. If I had been able to see how fast the ground was approaching, I might have fumbled things."

Mr Lindstrand said that the balloon's sensitivity to the temperature change as the sun fell was "quite dramatic". The lifting canopy, with a capacity of 1.1 million cubic feet, consisted of helium gas around a small hot-air balloon, intended to heat up the helium to provide lift. Although earlier tests by Mr Lindstrand on smaller designs were successful, the full-scale version had never been tested before this week's flight. As the team learnt, the small balloon could not heat the helium enough as the outside temperature fell below freezing.

Mr Branson said "We know that fundamentally the whole concept works. The difficulty of heating the helium at night-time is the only thing that really needs to be overcome to make this work."



Ritchie: Daring manoeuvre

## Police 'turn blind eye to criminals'

Senior police officers are allowing criminal gangs to operate unhindered provided they carry out their illegal activities in other parts of the country, a Home Office report has found, writes Jason Bennett.

Researchers discovered that some commanders were reluctant to devote resources to investigating known criminals who were not causing problems in their own area. Examples of the practice of turning a blind eye were found in all three mainland forces — Surrey, Bedfordshire and Northumbria — examined. The study, *Tackling Cross Border Crime*, by the Police Research Group, highlighted the issue as

part of the lack of communication between forces.

From analysis of 16 forces in England and Wales, the report estimated that about 10 per cent of all crime was committed by criminals living in this area but who were committing little crime there, [police] were not prepared to utilise divisional detectives to investigate that ring, even though it was believed that they were committing serious crime elsewhere."

## DAILY POEM

### Woman in a Mustard Field

By Alice Oswald

From love to light my element  
was altered when I fled  
out of your house to meet the space  
that blows about my head.

The sun was rude and sensible,  
the rivers ran for hours  
and whoops I found a mustard field  
exploding into flowers.

and I slowly came to sense again  
the thousand forms that move  
all summer through a living world  
that grows without your love.

This last selection from the volumes chosen for the TS Eliot Prize shortlist, presented by the Poetry Book Society, comes from Alice Oswald's *The Thing in the Gap-Stone Sill* (Oxford University Press). The £5,000 prize will be awarded to the winner on Monday by the poet's widow, Valerie Eliot.

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**W**e always knew it. And now we have the proof.

The politicians took Britain into a federal European superstate by deceit.

This is what the government said in its official White Paper on Britain's entry into Europe "There is no question of any erosion of essential national sovereignty".

Edward Heath, the Prime Minister, later added "There are some in this country who fear that in going into Europe, we shall in some way sacrifice independence and sovereignty... These fears, I need hardly say are completely unjustified..."

We now have chilling evidence that these statements were lies.

Well before they were made, Britain's Lord Chancellor wrote the letter shown opposite to Heath emphasising that in his view "the surrenders of sovereignty involved are serious..." and "...ought to be brought out into the open now..."

He pointed out that Parliament would have to surrender to Europe the power to legislate. That European law would be the supreme law of this land. That we would lose our sovereign power to make treaties. And that this would lead to a "fully federal state".

Yet Heath and his close colleagues chose to purposely mislead the British public.

And still, to this day, the lies continue as politicians deny the facts and pour scorn on those who warn of Britain's loss of sovereignty.

Quite deliberately they have arranged for the next European Summit, when the important decisions will be made, to take place *after* the General Election.

This cynical move allows them to continue deceiving us with empty promises until after it is too late.

By then, the people of Britain will be powerless to prevent the politicians going back on their promises and secretly surrendering our sovereign powers.

We must have a full referendum on Europe now.

We must not allow the politicians to deceive us yet again.

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